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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest, what's your level of confidence that rebates and refunds will be issued before the year ends?

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INSIDE

Mass Graves

A U.S. group releases satellite photos of what they said appear to be mass graves in Sudan.

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Even one of online video's biggest stars isn't immune to copyright claims.

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Student steals show in panel hearing

» Fitial, Kilili spar on HR 1466

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

A Mt. Carmel High School alumna testifying via Skype stole the show in early yesterday morning's public hearing on the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 and Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's H.R. 1466, even as Sablan and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial sparred over the fate of alien workers in the CNMI.

So moving was 19-year-old Hazel Marie Doctor's testimony that one member of the House Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs expressed sympathy for her plight as well as thousands of other U.S. citizen children like her born to nonresidents in the CNMI.

Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) was so impressed with Doctor's testimony and how eloquently she spoke that then and there he promised to help pass Sablan's legislation. He said it would be wrong to separate

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NATURALRESOURCES.HOUSE.GOV

DHS Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Kelly Ryan testifies during the U.S. subcommittee hearing on Public Law 110-229 and H.R. 1466 early yesterday morning in Room 1324 of Longworth House Office Building in Washington, D.C. Left, Mt. Carmel High School student Hazel Doctor testifies via Skype at the same hearing.

Sawada tries to kill self in jail

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Japanese musician and songwriter Taiji Sawada, who was arrested Monday when he became unruly aboard an airplane, was taken to the hospital after he allegedly tried to commit suicide while inside his detention cell Thursday night.

Police Commissioner Ramon Mafnas con-

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DPS firefighter who refused lie detector test resigns

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety personnel who refused to undergo a lie detector test in connection with the investigation into the disappearance of sisters Faloma and Maleina Luhk has resigned effective July 1, DPS Commissioner Ramon Mafnas disclosed yesterday.

As this developed, DPS assured protection to anyone who will come forward and offer information. Investigators are also planning to conduct another aerial search.

In a press briefing held at the Department of Corrections' conference room, Mafnas said the personnel who declined the polygraph test officially resigned as a firefighter and that he had accepted the resignation.

Mafnas stressed that this employee has every right to refuse to take the polygraph examination.

"It would be nice if everyone that we ask agrees to take the polygraph examination. Those, however, who refused we do question why the refusal," Mafnas said.

Refusing to take the polygraph examination, however, does not in-

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Local

AFTER NEARLY 17 YEARS OF SERVICE

Diego bids teary goodbye to Legislature

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Rep. Diego T. Benavente (Rep-Saipan) gave his swan song at the Legislature Thursday afternoon, with past and present colleagues rushing to congratulate him for a job well done immediately following the end of a House of Representatives session.

House Speaker Eli Cabrera (Rep-Saipan) quipped that the former lieutenant governor stepping down makes him want to retire too.

"We in Precinct I, we work as a team from the beginning. In the Legislature, there's always a minority and majority, by nature of politics. We work together, there's always ups and downs. On behalf of Precinct 1, I want to wish you the best of luck on your retirement," said Cabrera, who admitted he switched from Democrat to GOP because he didn't want to challenge Benavente.

Reps. Tony Sablan (Cov-Saipan) and Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan) also took turns thanking Benavente for his service as one of the more senior members of the House of Representatives.

Sen. Pete Reyes (Rep-Saipan) also took time to drop by the House chamber to say goodbye to a friend and colleague.

"This is a sad day because I've been working with congressman Benavente since the time of the 8th Legislature. All the three terms I served in the House he was the speaker. Then when I moved to the Senate we still worked together. We moved a lot of bills working together. There's a lot of young members who learned from him. His absence from the chamber will really be missed by many of us," said Reyes.

Former speaker and now Public Lands Secretary Oscar Babauta also was present and welcomed his old buddy into retirement from the Legislature.

"I've served in the Legislature for 18 years, nine terms. I had the opportunity of running with him in 1993 until I got out. I'm very happy, very proud about the political history former speaker Benavente and I put together. It will always be in the hearts and minds of our people, in particular Precinct 2 that we served back then," he said.

Salad days

When asked about the most memorable part of his close to 17 years of public service, Benavente said it was the time when he served as speaker.

"The years when I was the speaker, the leader of the House of Representatives, those were the good years. That was when there was money. I can say those times we were able to accomplish a lot. I was honored to have served as speaker during those times," he said.

Specifically, he mentioned the 11th Legislature—his third term as speaker—as the time in his political career he is most proud of.

"After the election, I told them I don't want to hog this position but for four years—as a speaker—I fought with then Gov. Froilan Tenorio. It just happened that there was a new administration for that 11th Legislature and I asked to try to become speaker for one term with a cooperating administration. As it turned out, we introduced a record-number of bills. We passed a record-number of bills and there were a record-number of bills that were signed into law during the 11th Legislature."

The poignancy of Benavente's retirement after almost 17 years of public service—both as congressman and second-highest official in the Executive Branch—allowed for a momentary truce between old political rivals Benavente and Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan).

Following a heated debate on the floor Thursday afternoon, Benavente approached the former governor and shook hands with his cousin after Tenorio appeared to agree on Benavente's point on amendments to the CNMI's Anti-Littering Act.

In an interview with the *Saipan Tribune*, Benavente wished his replacement, former representative and congresswoman-in-waiting Janet Maratita, and the rest of the House good luck as they continue to address the many problems the islands are faced with.

"It's a major challenge. All of the leaders really need to continue to fight through this and turn things around because our people are suffering," said Benavente, who left yesterday for Kosrae to attend a meeting of the Pacific Islands Development Bank, where he serves as one of the governors.

Work for $5.05/hour

Although he is retiring from public service, Benavente said he is very much open to working in the private sector if anyone will take him.

"I have two kids in college who I will continue to support. I will look for something in the private sector. Minimum wage will get me more than what I'm making now…if it means [taking] a minimum wage job, I'll take it. I hope to find something I like doing. I hope to find something that will continue my participation on civic issues. Next week when I get back from Kosrae I would be making phone calls, knocking on doors, and talking to people…looking for a job," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

While fighting away tears, Benavente said he will continue to pray with the rest of the community for the leaders of the CNMI. He also took time to thank his colleagues, legislative staff, and even the media.

He, however, reserved his most heartfelt gratitude to his constituents in Precinct 1 and the rest of the people of the Commonwealth who have entrusted him again and again by voting him into office.

Benavente added that although he leaves with a tinge of guilt, not having finished his term as congressman, he is confident that members of the House will carry on and do what's best for the Commonwealth.

$70 fee to check in second bag

GUAM—United Continental announced yesterday changes to United and Continental's checked baggage policy for customers traveling between Micronesia and the mainland U.S., Canada and U.S. territories such as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The new policy takes effect immediately for tickets purchased beginning July 15, 2011, for travel on or after Aug. 15, 2011.

Customers who purchase certain economy class tickets for travel on or after the effective date will pay a service fee of $70 to check a second bag.

United and Continental continue to offer options for customers traveling with checked bags. The service fee will not apply to elite customers, those seated in first and business class and U.S. military personnel and their families traveling on official orders.

United and Continental's baggage policy for domestic travel and carry-on baggage remains unchanged. For more details of United and Continental's baggage policies, visit united.com and continental.com. ***(United Continental)***

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Business sector welcomes $1M grant from OIA

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce welcomed yesterday the Office of Insular Affairs' $1 million grant to the CNMI to develop industries identified in a labor and economic forum held last year.

Chamber president Douglas Brennan hopes the assistance extended by OIA would help spur economic activity in the CNMI.

He added that he is glad to see the federal government finally stepping up to the plate as far as promises made to help the islands incorporated in Public Law 110-229 or the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008, which put CNMI immigration under federal control.

"The CNRA clearly indicates the federal government should, with respect to Title 7 P.L. 110-229, execute an orderly phasing in of federal immigration authority while minimizing adverse economic consequences during the transition period. Existing businesses were to be assisted during this period, while the federal government would continue to assist in developing a higher standard of living in the CNMI," said Brennan.

The Chamber president also said they have suggested to the Fitial administration that part of the money be set aside to immediately survey the work force to allow for the establishment of the CNMI prevailing wage rates.

Other uses of the grant, the Chamber suggested, were to assist the field of tourism, training the local work force, and renewable energy.

Businessman Anthony Pellegrino, meanwhile, is ecstatic about the grant awarded by the OIA.

"I hope NMTI (Northern Marianas Trades Institute) will be included and money would be put into good use. It's a positive attitude. I'm so happy," he said.

Pellegrino said he hopes the grant would also help the agriculture industry, which he sees as an alternative to the now extinct garment industry.

"It cannot be as big as garment manufacturing, but we can still do a big chunk in helping our economy [rebound]," he said.

He said the CNMI can again be the breadbasket of the region. He said after World War II, Guam used to buy 200,000 lbs of produce a year from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

"Guam [now] imports $4 million a month of produce and nothing from us. What does it say about us that we don't get any part of that," he said.

Economy spiraling downward

A day before the $1 million grant from OIA, CNMI leaders got confirmation that the islands' economy continues to contract—nearly 20 percent in 2009 and some 12 percent in 2008.

Those figures didn't come as a big surprise to Brennan and the Chamber.

"I'd expect to see the economy continue to spiral downward for the next few years. Both GAO (Government Accountability Office) and the Conway/McPhee report anticipate a 3-5 year constriction as a result of loss of the apparel industry and the decline in tourist arrivals. Essentially, it's the ripple effect," he said.

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos echoed Brennan's observation when asked about the average 16 percent drop in the CNMI's real gross domestic product numbers in the latest survey from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

"This was no surprise. We know it, we see it. It's just a validation of what's happening here in the economy. We just need to turn this things around. I don't know how low can you go really. Let's just continue to work together and find a common ground and all talk about how do we bring the economy back and bring people back to work," said Inos.

House Speaker Eli Cabrera (Rep-Saipan), for his part, said the figures are just about right when one considers the loss the once-mighty garment industry and the continued drop in tourist arrivals.

He said the CNMI should look toward developing the agriculture and aquaculture industries. But in order to move forward, the speaker said farmers and fishermen should be given reasonable rate in loans by the Commonwealth Development Authority.

Inos to seek nominee from Coalition of Private Schools for rep to BOE

Acting governor Eloy Inos has promised Board Education members and officials that he will appoint a teachers' representative to the board soon.

The board has two vacancies at present: a representative each for private and public school teachers.

In a meeting with education officials Wednesday at the Office of the Governor, Inos explained that due to constitutional requirements for the public school teachers' appointee, legislation needs to be made and enacted first. There is no such issue with the appointment of a representative for private school teachers so Inos said a representative can be named soon.

Inos asked the help of Tim Thornburgh, the Public School System's federal programs officer, in completing the criteria for the selection. He was advised to seek a nominee from the Coalition of Private Schools to make sure the individual has a strong relationship with all private educational institutions.

"I'd like to appoint someone who is a role model to all the private schools," said Inos.

There are 32 private schools on island, of which 24 are members of the coalition headed by Scott Norman, principal of the Calvary Christian Academy and former private schools' representative on the board.

Since Norman's departure from the board in October 2009, his post has remained unfilled. The teachers' rep position for public schools became vacant when Ambrose Bennett's term ended in January 2008.

Board member Herman Guerrero said the board hopes to see a new member who is not afraid to speak to the board. ***(Moneth Deposa)***

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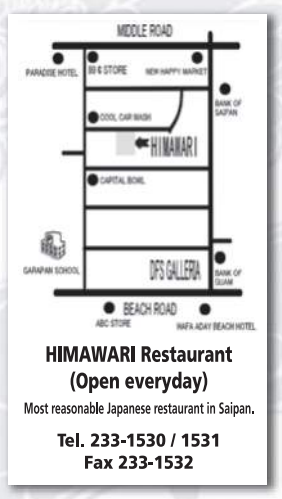

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Ma-On intensifies, but moves away from NMI

Typhoon Ma-On continued yesterday to move away from the Northern Marianas. packing maximum sustained winds of 125 miles per hour.

The National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Office said, however, that heavy seas and high surf along with gusty winds will continue another day or two in the Marianas as Typhoon Ma-On moves west away from the region.

NWS said small boats and water craft should exercise caution and remain secured and stay in port through the day, Friday.

"Do not attempt inter-island travel until winds and seas subside," NWS warned.

From 115 miles per hour yesterday morning, Typhoon Ma-On's maximum sustained winds increased to 125 mph in the afternoon.

As of 1pm, the center was 275 miles west-northwest of Agrihan, 305 miles northwest of Pagan, 325 miles northwest of Alamagan, 450 miles north-northwest of Saipan, and 520 miles north-northwest of Guam.

As of 7am, the center of the typhoon was 200 miles northwest of Agrihan, 235 miles northwest of Pagan, 260 miles northwest of Alamagan, 405 miles north-northwest of Saipan, and 490 miles north-northwest of Guam.

NWS urged Guan and CNMI residents to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches especially those along west facing reefs as rip currents are life threatening. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

SAWADA

From Page 1

firmed yesterday that Sawada was transported to the Commonwealth Health Center and was placed under observation in the intensive care unit.

Mafnas said more details will be provided to the media after Sawada's family is notified, through the Japan Consular Office, about the incident.

Saipan Tribune learned from sources at DPS that the 45-year-old Sawada was rushed to the hospital after he tried to hang himself using a bed sheet.

Because of the incident, Sawada failed to show up at his scheduled detention hearing yesterday morning at the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

Sawada is facing charges of interfering with the performance of a flight attendant. Sawada allegedly became unruly as the aircraft was descending in preparation for landing at the Saipan International airport on Monday. He allegedly punched the plane's window, kicked the seat in front of him, and assaulted a flight attendant

U.S. District Court for the NMI judge William Hayes has appointed attorney Mark Hanson to represent Sawada.

FBI special agent Mary Goff stated in her report that Sawada was among the passengers of Delta Flight 298.

Sawada, who was in the business class cabin, had reportedly become angry with a female passenger and started punching the window and kicking the seat in front of him.

The report did not mention what caused his anger and whether Sawada and the passenger were related.

According to Wikipedia and a source from the Japanese media, Sawada is primarily known for his work with the once popular and now disbanded heavy metal band X. He played bass in that band on their first three albums. He is still performing with the bands Cloud Nine, Taiji with Heavens and TSP (Taiji & Shu Project).

DPS

From Page 1

dicate guilt, he added.

Mafnas refused to disclose the reason cited by the firefighter in resigning from DPS, saying it's a private matter.

He said they spoke with the firefighter about the Luhk sisters' case not once but at least twice.

"We have to be cautious. We need to have evidence," the commissioner said.

Right now, Mafnas said, they don't have any evidence to support any person of interest as being a participant in this case, which he described as a "heinous crime."

Mafnas admitted that no one has stepped forward and declared or claimed to have seen anything.

He guaranteed protection for anyone who would like to step forward and promised to keep their identities private.

Mafnas said he and FBI special agent Tom Simon share the same concerns and message—that they understand the community's concern and interest in this matter.

"We ask for their cooperation and assistance as much as we want. We want to gather as much information or any significant evidence that tie to the person or persons of interest," Mafnas said.

He said they will continue to perform searches upon request by the FBI or DPS investigators.

Mafnas said they will be conducting another aerial search but admitted that he does now know how much benefit they can derive from another aerial search.

"Regardless of the time gone by, we continue to feel strongly about pursuing this case," he said "We assure the community that the moment we have sufficient evidence we will act promptly."

Police officer Jason Tarkong said they are focusing on the investigation, but that they will not discuss the evidence or strategy associated with the investigation. He said search areas are very much part of this investigative process.

"We continue to urge the public to step forward if they have any information. One of our many goals in this investigation is to protect witnesses and keep their identity anonymous," he said.

Ten-year-old Faloma and 9-year-old Maleina were reportedly last seen near a bus stop pavilion in As Teo on May 25.

HEARING

From Page 1

families like Doctor's in the CNMI and that they will look for a solution to the problem.

In her testimony, Doctor said as the CNRA or Public Law 110-229 goes into effect, she will have to choose between her country—the U.S.—and her family.

She said her parents have been working in the CNMI the past 20 years but are not U.S. citizens. Doctor said the CNRA would force them to leave the islands they've called home because the intent of the law is to send all foreign workers home—in her parents' case, the Philippines.

"So, our family will be faced with some difficult decisions. Should my sister and I go with our parents to the Philippines to keep the family together, or stay behind in the America, the only home we have ever known?"

Doctor asked members of the subcommittee why she and her sister should be made to choose between their family and their country.

"We believe separating our families would be immoral; it would be a grave injustice and a critical democratic error, so we ask you to protect our families. We ask you to support H.R. 1466, which will allow our families to remain in the Northern Marianas with the same rights they had under [Northern] Marianas immigration law. And we ask that you act now for the sake of our families and our future," said Doctor.

Large-scale amnesty

Fitial spoke out against H.R. 1466, saying the legislation is masquerading as a bill that will keep families together but in reality is a large scale amnesty for aliens.

"It provides a direct route to citizenship that would create an estimated 11,000 new U.S. citizens in the Commonwealth within the next 10 years—virtually all of whom are adults and would be voters," he said.

Fitial said this type of amnesty would occur at a time when the current U.S. citizen population of Chamorro and Carolinian ancestry is estimated to decline.

"Our severe economic recession has caused some of these citizens to move to the mainland just to earn enough to support their families. The social disruption from arbitrarily creating citizens in this large proportion cannot be overstated. I do not believe that turning this large population of alien temporary workers into citizen voters would be tolerated in any county or state in the United States," he said.

Fitial

Fitial added that H.R. 1466 would also allow a parent who is unemployed to qualify to remain in the Commonwealth forever. He said the CNMI would forced to foot the bill for supporting them because, under H.R. 1466, they are not allowed to travel to the U.S.

"The direct and indirect costs to the CNMI government each year for unemployed aliens remaining in the Commonwealth is high and a particular burden on CNMI taxpayers," he said.

In the panel discussion later, Sablan indirectly scored Fitial on unemployed parents benefiting from H.R. 1466 when he asked Doctor whether her parents are unemployed.

Doctor said her parents are accountants that, through savings and hard work, are able to put her and her sister to private school. In fact, Doctor has offers of up to $60,000 in scholarships from mainland schools, volunteered Sablan, who is a family friend and has known Doctor her whole life.

The CNMI delegate also said it is not Fitial's place to now say that the parents of individuals like Doctor's would not be deported because it is DHS which controls immigration and not the Commonwealth government.

"We can't continue to be delusional that we'll be fine when the Commonwealth no longer controls the borders," he said.

Office of Insular Affairs Director Nikolao I. Pula Jr., meanwhile, belied Fitial's 11,000 estimate of nonresidents expected to benefit from H.R. 1466.

"At the time of the report, the department's best estimate was that 20,654 legal aliens resided in the CNMI. H.R. 1466 is consistent with the Secretary's (Ken Salazar) report in that it would give long-term status to more than 5,000 of these persons," he said.

Pula added that a 2010 Interior report had recommended granting long-term status to foreign workers who have lawfully resided in the CNMI for a minimum period of five years.

DHS Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Kelly Ryan said her agency shares with the H.R. 1466's sponsors the general view that the unique circumstances of the CNMI deserves special consideration.

"We will carefully examine the bill with the sponsors of the legislation to explore particular solutions for the groups in the CNMI. DHS recognizes the historic nature of the transition and special circumstances that exists in the CNMI, specially the economic challenges faced by the CNMI in restoring its economy, implementing minimum wage increases, and increasing tourism and other investments," she said in her testimony.

She also apologized for the delay in the issuance of CNM-only transitional worker regulations, adding that she expects the rules to come out sometime in mid-September 2011.

Ryan later assured Sablan that if worker regulations are not out before CNMI alien workers' umbrella permits expire on Nov. 28, 2011, DHS would use its parole authority to allow these workers to continue to live and work in the CNMI.

Sablan's bill advances at Subcommittee hearing

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Following yesterday's hearing on H.R. 1466, a bill that would provide stability for Northern Marianas families at risk of separation as a result of federal immigration law, CNMI Delegate Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan, the bill's sponsor and ranking member of the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs, issued the following statement:

ON THE NET

The Hearing Webcast and submitted testimony is available at http://resources.edgeboss.net/wmedia/resources/112/2011_07_14_fwoia.wvx

"I am most grateful to Chairman John Fleming for recognizing that there are families in the Northern Mariana Islands who need the help of Congress. I thank the Chairman for scheduling today's hearing to examine this problem and consider how we can fix it.

"These are families with people born in the Northern Mariana Islands in the four years before the CNMI government came into existence. These are families with people to whom CNMI law gave Permanent Resident status. And these are families of U.S. Citizens with family members who are not yet eligible for permanent status under federal law.

"I am especially appreciative of the other Members of the Subcommittee who took the time to be at the hearing and listen to the concerns of people in the Northern Mariana Islands. Congressman Don Young, Republican of Alaska and one of the bill's co-sponsors, forcefully urged that the bill be passed. Later in the day Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa, Democrat of Hawaii, sent word that as a result of what she learned at the hearing she was signing on as a co-sponsor.

"It was also quite helpful that the Government Accountability Office witness, Dr. David Gootnick, was able to provide an objective analysis of the number of people who will be helped by H.R. 1466, which has been lacking.

"I look forward to working with Chairman Fleming and with the Obama Administration to fine-tune the bill, if necessary, and to get the legislation passed by the House, through the Senate, and signed by the President before any families in the Northern Marianas are separated as a result of federal immigration law." ***(PR)***

Judge issues restraining order to protect lawyer

» Man jailed for contempt becomes unruly in court

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has issued a temporary restraining order against a former businessman who allegedly made threatening gestures at a lawyer after a hearing on a contempt issue.

Yesterday, Juan B. Roberto, a former businessman, became unruly in court and threatened to commit suicide shortly after associate judge David A. Wiseman ordered him to start serving a 10-day prison term for contempt.

Three court marshals subdued Roberto, who kept yelling that he does not deserve jail term and kicked the court's doors. About three police officers assisted the court marshals in getting him inside a police car.

Roberto's contempt case arose from his dispute with a former wife. Roberto was found in contempt by the court several times when he failed to comply with the court's order to return his former wife's diamond ring, laptop and Rolex watch, or make a good faith offer of payment.

Attorney David G. Banes, counsel for Roberto's former wife, also requested a TRO against Roberto, stating that after the hearing on June 9, 2011, Roberto drove around to where he (Banes) was walking to his vehicle, rolled down his window, made threatening gestures, then drove off. On Wednesday, Wiseman granted Banes' request for TRO.

At yesterday's hearing, Wiseman found Roberto not complying with the court orders and ordered him to start serving his 10-day sentence. The judge ordered him to return to court on July 26 at 1:30pm.

When Wiseman left the courtroom, Roberto told his current girlfriend he will not go to prison as he has not committed any wrongdoing.

After the court marshals handcuffed him, Roberto threatened to hang himself instead of going to jail. The two marshals had to call for backup as Roberto began challenging the marshals to shoot him, even as his girlfriend tried to calm him down.

Roberto kicked the doors of the courtrooms and the marshal's office and kept yelling. Two police officers later arrived and Roberto was brought to the Department of Corrections.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Court marshals take Juan B. Roberto to a police car as his girlfriend tries to calm him down outside the judicial building in Susupe yesterday.

Fitial drums up support for shipyard legislation

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, MITA Group's Jason Osborne, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), and Fitial's press secretary Angel A. Demapan pose for a photo following meeting at the U.S. Senate.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Immediately after providing testimony at the U.S. House side on U.S. Public Law 110-229 and House Resolution 1466, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial trekked to the Senate side to garner support from members of the Senate Armed Services Committee in an effort to take legislative action that would include the CNMI as an eligible site for the operation of a shipyard facility that would be able to service and repair U.S. flagship vessels.

Similar to the facility in Guam, a shipyard in the Northern Marianas would give ships operating in and around region a ship repair facility with full dry dock and overhaul capabilities in the Western Pacific.

While the CNMI has long been economically challenged by the lack of viable industries since the exodus of the garment manufacturing business, the Fitial administration has been eyeing bringing the large-scale shipyard industry to the Commonwealth.

"Not only would such a huge industry bring much needed economic stimulation to the CNMI, it would also create a myriad of much needed jobs for our residents," said Fitial. "At this point, providing jobs to our people is my administration's priority. The only way to achieve this goal is to lure big business types of investments."

The governor, along with press secretary Angel Demapan and MITA group's Jason Osborne, began his round of meetings at the office of Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska), and then headed down the hall to see Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona) and Sen. Jim Webb (D-Virginia) respectively. Herb Yamada from Delegate Kilili Sablan's office was also present in the meeting at Begich's office.

McCain, for his part, expressed his concerns for the people of the CNMI and his strong willingness to help resuscitate the depressed economy. As a start, McCain indicated his support to seeking congressional relief that would pave the way for a shipyard facility on Saipan. He further requested to be furnished with pertinent data relative to the economic decline in the CNMI as it would serve as a valuable reference in aiding and reinvigorating the Commonwealth's economic woes.

Webb thanked Fitial for visiting his office and reiterated his historical ties to the CNMI, having been stationed on the islands while was serving in the U.S. Marine Corps. Webb indicated that his military legislative assistant, Gordon Peterson, will take the lead from his office in terms of the CNMI's effort to be included in the shipyard authorization.

Fitial was very pleased with the warm response and show of support received from members of the Senate Armed Services Committee. The governor said he will continue to reach out to other members of Congress to ensure that adequate support is in place for this endeavor.

"I am confident that the members of the U.S. Congress will strongly consider our request and pave the way for economic relief for the thousands of Americans who call the CNMI home," said Fitial.

Immediately after the meeting with Webb, Fitial had to leave Washington, D.C. en route to Salt Lake City, Utah for the annual meeting of the National Governors Association. ***(PR)***

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled on **Thursday, July 21, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Garapan, Saipan.** The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. PRELIMARY MATTERS
- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES
- a. April 12, 2011 – Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- b. April 19, 2011 – Special Board Meeting Minutes

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

V. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
- a. CDBG Updates
- b. PY 2011 CDBG Proposals

VI. MORTGAGE CREDIT PROGRAM
- a. Lease-To-Own of NMHC Properties
- b. REO Purchase
- c. MPLT Accounts at BOH Update
- d. HOME Loans for Approval
- e. USDA RD new MOU
- f. Other Loan Matters

VII. PROGRAM & HOUSING
- a. Section 8 New Construction Program: Liyo Update

VIII. FIELD OFFICE REPORTS

IX. FISCAL AFFAIRS
- a. Amended Budget for FY 2012
- b. Financial Statements
- c. BOH Reserve Account
- d. Outstanding Receivable for BOH Non-MPLT and MPLT Accounts
- e. HUD Grants Update

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XI. OTHER MATTERS
- a. LIHTC Updates
- b. LIHTC Evaluations

XII. ADJOURNMENT

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ **MARCIE M. TOMOKANE**
Chairwoman of the Board

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXI, Issue No. 167

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
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MEMBER
AP The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Fading leadership

© 2011, Philadelphia Inquirer

The fight over deficit reduction has revealed the weakness of Republican leaders in Congress, who appear incapable of controlling the tea-drinking monster they helped create.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, were mistaken if they thought they could easily remove the tea-party yoke they accepted in pledging opposition to any tax increase to raise the debt ceiling.

Resigned to the fact that he can't get his fellow Republicans to compromise, Boehner reportedly has been sitting silently in negotiations with President Obama while tea-party favorite Eric Cantor, R-Va., the House majority leader, does the railing against any revenue proposal. Sources told the Washington Post that in talks Tuesday, Obama snapped at Cantor, "Am I dealing with him, or am I dealing with you?"

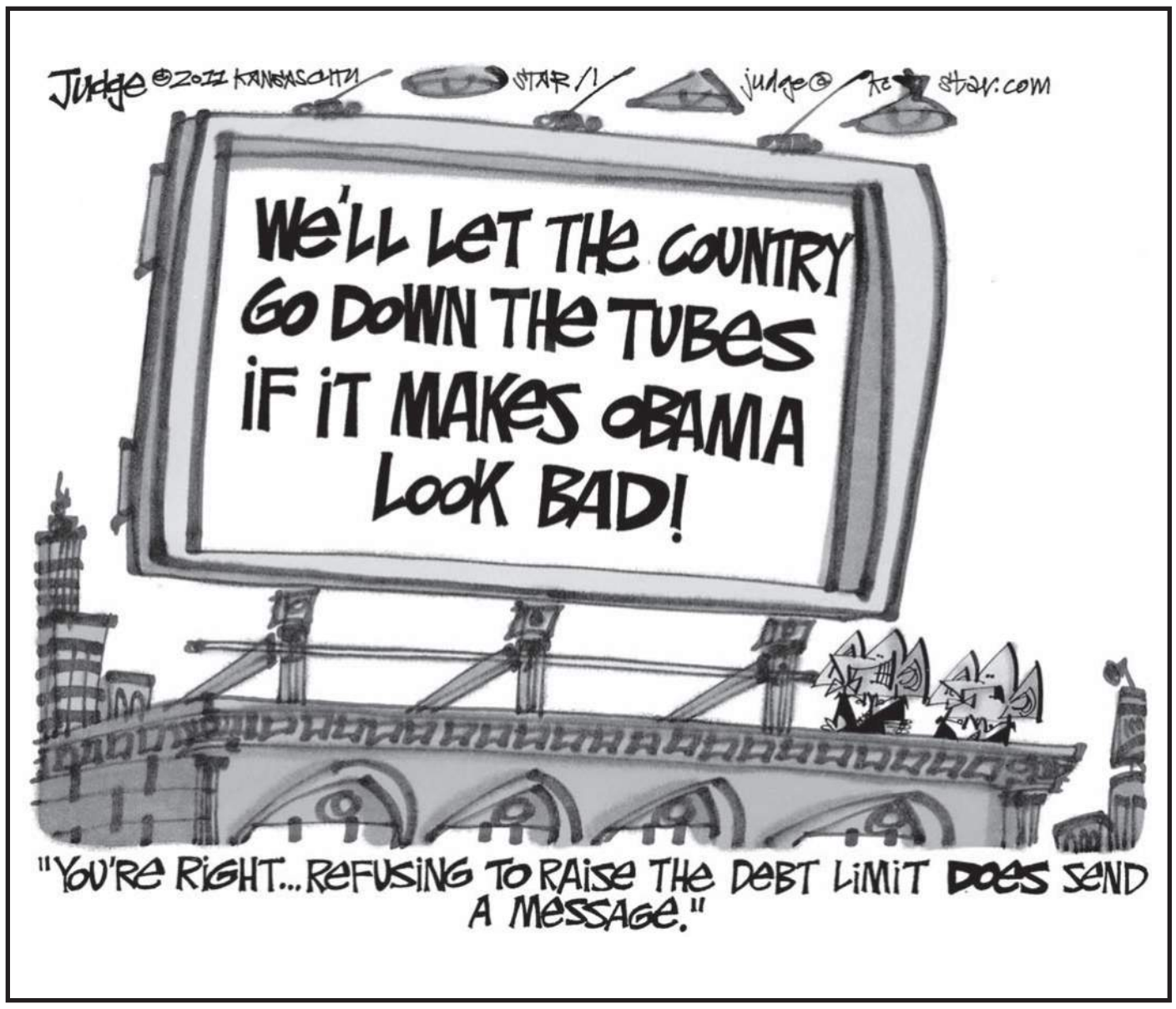
Meanwhile, McConnell acknowledged that the debt impasse is as much about politics as it is fiscal policy. "I have little question that as long as this president is in the Oval Office, a real solution is probably unattainable," he said.

Seeing no route to a compromise, McConnell offered a proposal Tuesday that would allow the president to increase the government's borrowing authority through a type of executive order. Congress could still vote down debt increases, but those votes would have to withstand a presidential veto.

For his trouble, McConnell was dumped on by tea-party organizations. FreedomWorks used Twitter to urge members to telephone McConnell to "help him find his spine." For America chairman Brent Bozell said, "If Mitch McConnell thinks caving to President Obama and allowing him to raise the debt ceiling without cuts is the way to become Senate majority leader, he is sorely mistaken."

Bozell's remarks may suggest a Republican takeover of the Senate. But any prediction of voters' ultimate response to this episode in the overarching debate about the size of government isn't so clear.

Obama touched a nerve when he refused to rule out Social Security and other government checks' being delayed if the debt limit isn't raised by the Aug. 2 deadline. By not compromising, Republicans are setting themselves up as the party to blame.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"YOU'RE RIGHT... REFUSING TO RAISE THE DEBT LIMIT DOES SEND A MESSAGE."

For sale: U.S. infrastructure?

By LISA SCHWEITZER
Los Angeles Times

Lisa Schweitzer is an associate professor in the School of Policy, Planning and Development at the University of Southern California. She wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.

Greece is having a fire sale of its publicly-owned transportation system, with planes, trains and roads all being sold off as the country attempts to dig out of its debt crisis. Americans should watch and learn: We could well be privatizing large segments of our own transportation system soon because of the U.S. debt crisis.

Last week, Rep. John L. Mica, R-Fla., chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, introduced a bill that would slash transportation spending, limiting it to the amount brought in by federal gas tax revenues and other existing highway fees. That roughly translates into federal spending of $215 billion to $230 billion over six years for highway and transit projects—about half of what the Obama administration sought last year.

The draconian spending proposal, dubbed "the Republican road to ruin" by critics, comes at a time when groups such as the American Society of Civil Engineers are saying that the United States needs to invest an additional $1 trillion beyond current levels over the next decade just to maintain and repair existing infrastructure.

We are facing a road infrastructure crisis, and it is of our own making. The federal gas tax has been unchanged, at 18 cents, since 1993, even as vehicles have gotten more fuel efficient. Adjusted for inflation, it amounts to a measly 12 cents today. But Americans, according to surveys, don't want to raise the tax.

For politicians like Mica, this opens doors to privatization projects. Last month, he introduced a bill that would put private companies in charge of Amtrak's operations in the Northeast Corridor. Taking that step, he contended, would be the fastest way to get high-speed rail up and running in the United States because it's clear that President Obama's federally sponsored rail plan has little support in Congress.

Maybe Mica is right. But rushing to privatize state-owned assets can lead to terrible infrastructure deals that let private companies walk away with prime assets and leave taxpayers with no guarantee of better services or lower fees.

Unlike the Greeks, who must sell to receive bailout funds, we still have a say in our infrastructure future. But the time for planning ahead and striking strong deals is dwindling, along with our infrastructure funds.

Many European countries and cities have privatized infrastructure and city services. You want to use the highway—you pay. You want to stroll through a "public" garden—you pay. You can avoid higher taxes, but if you want the services, you pay the private company that holds the franchise. It is a system that works fine for those with cash to spend.

Scaling down public ownership of transportation networks also means carefully selecting which parts of the system to sell or lease out. Private companies usually desire assets associated with the most demand for services, such as the Northeast Corridor. But if we sell off or lease these assets to get private companies to build a high-speed rail system there, we may also be giving up the only part of a high-speed rail network likely to generate enough cash in the long term to keep a national system running without taxpayer help.

So far, privately run transportation projects show mixed outcomes. For every successful privatization story of service improvement and mounting profits—Britain's airport privatization, say—there's a disaster story of poor service and taxpayers left holding the bailout bag: think the Chunnel or Chicago's privatized parking woes. Privatized transportation projects carry risks for both sides.

So long as Americans refuse to even index gas taxes to inflation, let alone raise the tax outright, we won't be spending enough to maintain our transportation infrastructure, which means that its value will continue to fall. That will make it difficult to attract private investment or get a fair price for state-owned assets if the government opts to privatize its transportation assets. Too many more years of disinvestment and we will have to make gun-to-the-head decisions like Greece's, shock ourselves with big tax increases later, or both.

Without new revenue sources, the long-term problems for U.S. infrastructure finance are going to continue even if Congress manages a debt-ceiling deal. By contrast, if the U.S. defaults on its debt, our bond ratings will tumble. The higher costs of bond financing would then raise infrastructure costs through the roof. And those financing costs would put government negotiators at even more of a disadvantage in privatization deals.

Averting default would give U.S. leaders wiggle room to find public-private partnerships that really do serve the public interest. To do so, they must choose to maintain both America's credibility and its existing assets.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Incheon's inch on

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

Dalliance in Dalian was our last reflection from the southernmost city of China's *Dong Bei,* a light touch by the title, but we remember the not-so-subtle chastisement from an acquaintance that took exception to our title as salaciously suggestive. We were playful in the Hugh Hefner sense!

Dalian has a feminine touch. Mama-san-skilled drivers drive the elongated two-unit spanking new buses. The four-level underground shopping mall fronting the major train terminal station, one of many in the city, are staffed by femme fatale store operators who can navigate through four languages spoken by customers ever willing to part with their ruble, won, yen, and dollar away. No wonder Dalian students lead my Oral English classes at the University! They have ample opportunities to practice it!

So, all right, like everywhere else where the couture and other art forms of Tokyo-New York-Paris are widely appropriated and appreciably imitated, of cosmetic applications, some tend to be on the gaudy side. With two male SAU freshman and a high school student from Shenyang in tow, coming down to Saipan for their summer vacation, our contingent is not short of comments on the poetry in motion of pulchritude abundant in Dalian's commercial and official services. Happily, refinement outnumbers the garish, loud, tawdry, flamboyant, showy, and even lurid fashion apers.

The female immigration officer at the airport evidently had more advanced customer-service orientation compared to the brusque male counterpart we encountered half a year ago. We might be crossing the line of sexist comments but hey, I enjoyed the thorough pat-all-over of the security officer. In spite of fatigue and the army boots, the officer looked like she just walked out of a modeling shoot at *Cosmo* and *Vogue* magazines. (Was going to say *Playboy*, but I am already in hot water with my feminist friends as it is!) So captivated I was that I almost exited out so I can return for a second patting!

Maybe it is the ambience. International travel does involve a level of sophistication more than what would prevail at the ground level of the *xiao shi chang* (village market) but the *Hangeul Saram* (Korean) in our Dalian-Incheon Asiana flight were a grade higher than the prospective CAAC flight attendants learning English at SAU. Oh, our students are physically stunning, all right, height-wise and otherwise, but communication-wise, their Korean sisters hold a brighter candle on English language proficiency.

In our last short hauls three months before on China Southern, from Manila to Xiamen, and on to Shenyang, our stewards' concern were on appearance, with their 5-inch heels that are most impractical in navigating the aisle but looks pleasing, particularly to the watchful male of the specie. On the other hand, the Korean contingent had flat comfortable walking shoes, their services efficiently delivered on the 50-minute skirt-around *Chosun Saram* (North Korea) air space, nothing but effectivity par excellence.

On body appearance, my China flight attendants sport an official head cap, which make them appear more like officers in military uniforms than anything else. I would have preferred the proletarian practicality of the PLA. Their Korean sisters wore an efficient *au pair* attire with nary a hair out of place, ready to serve boxed meals with grace and land-of-the-morning-calm smiles. One brought me a copy of the *Korea Herald* daily without my asking for it, just because the attendant heard me speak English.

Never mind that after mouthwash and a touch of cologne, their aura still betrayed a whiff of *kimche,* but in our case, we swoon on the stuff anyway, and given the clientele, I suspect that only the pickiest olfactory purist would be adversely affected.

I often ask for an exit row seat for the leg space, and on this flight, I got 13-A, right behind what would normally be 12-A. The airline reversed the seat aft the emergency exit and installed an attendant's seat facing 13-A. So on take-off and landing, as well as the brief moment of turbulence when the pilot advised the staff to buckle up, I had the pleasure of eye balling Mona Lisa with the attractive and alert stare-at-a-distance non-smile.

Incheon International Airport, not unlike its sibling structures around the world, is a verifiable and qualitative feast table, albeit at Manhattan prices. Suvarnabhumi and Changi, Chep Lap Kok and JFK, Narita and Dulles, Charles de Gaulle and O'Hare, Pearson and Pudong, SFO and Buenos Aires, of our passing acquaintance before Lagos Lagoon malaria curtailed our peripatetic pedagogy, are similar steel and glass structures. Coffee costs $4 in Incheon, but will take 22 Renminbi ($3.40) for the same.

George Soros knows this money exchange discrepancy well. The author of *Alchemy of Finance* who earned a bundle in the pound sterling devaluation of long ago, has also the wherewithal to do something about it. My snotty "phantom wealth" stance, however, puts me in a different league. That's why Soros sits comfortably in a penthouse while I teach Oral English in the north fields of *Zhongguo*.

Oh, well.

Mexican immigration surprise

By LAURA MARTINEZ
NEWSDAY

Last December, during a flight I took between Newark, N.J., and Mexico City, a middle-age Mexican man walked to the back of the cabin asking assistance to fill out the customs entry forms required by his government. The man didn't know how to read or write, he explained, so he was asking the flight attendant to fill out the forms for him. She kindly complied.

"How long do you plan to stay in Mexico?" the flight attendant asked him in perfect Spanish.

"I'm staying there forever. I'm not coming back," he said. "I miss my family, and there are no more jobs for us here."

This exchange stayed with me for quite some time, mostly because I found it hard to imagine being 50-plus years old and not being able to read or write. But I was also struck by the certainty in which the man stressed the "us" ("nosotros") part in explaining the lack of jobs to be found "here" ("aca").

I thought about this man again this week, after learning that—according to the Mexican Migration Project, a collaborative research project between Princeton University and the University of Guadalajara—Mexicans' interest in heading to the United States has fallen to its lowest level since at least the 1950s. And that wasn't all. In addition to a decline in new undocumented immigration, the project has also found a significant increase of Mexicans returning home.

The explanations for this are varied: The pool of potential migrants is shrinking as Mexican families become smaller; crossing the border is increasingly expensive and dangerous; jobs are scarce. Also relevant is that more states are passing draconian anti-immigrant laws.

Undocumented workers in states like Arizona, Utah, North Carolina, Alabama and South Carolina, have begun to flee, fearing deportation or—worse—incarceration. And while it's true many of these workers are moving to other states, many others are going home.

Why? Apparently—and despite the many horrors we read about every day involving Mexico's increasing violence amid a bloody war on drugs—there are also newly created jobs and opportunities, making the rite of going "para el Norte" less and less attractive, at least among the younger generations.

But the current economic climate and growing anti-immigrant sentiments in the United States likely aren't the only factors fueling the Mexican immigration slowdown. I think this is also a generational thing—at least, that's the case in my family. Two of my uncles on my mother's side and one on my father's side did come to the United States during the 1950s and 1960s.

For the most part, they were able to find good jobs and live better lives than they would have back in Mexico.

But today, not one of my nieces or nephews—or the nieces and nephews of my friends and acquaintances—think of the United States as the promised land for jobs and opportunities.

To be sure, there are still millions of undocumented immigrants in the United States, about 60 percent of whom are Mexican. There are also an estimated 3 million who entered the country as minors. For those who came as children—who did not make their own decision to break the U.S. immigration laws—there's only one thing to do: Create a path to legalization and allow them to stay in the only country they really know, by reconsidering and passing the Dream Act.

Should the current immigration patterns continue, many of the rest will find their way back on their own, like the man I met on the plane last Christmas. That's one, partial way to address immigration in the United States. But it shouldn't take Washington off the hook when it comes to addressing this country's failed immigration policies.

Laura Martinez is a New York City-based journalist and blogger at www.Miblogestublog.com. She wrote this for Newsday.

The Arab Spring will take a while to reach completion

By GHASSAN MICHEL RUBEIZ
THE PROGRESSIVE MEDIA PROJECT

We need to be patient with the uprisings in the Arab world.

The dramatic spread of the revolts and the ease of ousting Tunisian strongman Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak have raised unrealistic expectations about the speed of political and social change in the Middle East.

Let's remember that after the American Revolution, it took almost a century and a Civil War for the country to acknowledge that slavery is evil. It took an additional 100 years to issue historic civil rights legislation.

The great news is that the process of change in the Arab world has irretrievably taken off. The marathon race for freedom started last December, and the contestants are running at different speeds.

Some Arab uprisings have already achieved the first level of liberation: political reform or regime change. Constitutional reform—the second stage of the struggle—has proven to be tough. And the third level—liberty in the practice of religion—has yet to start.

A few societies are in the front in this race. Tunisia and Egypt and have already accomplished the first stage of liberation. Other societies are struggling hard to complete the first phase: Revolts confront obstinate and insecure regimes in Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria. And some rulers consider their systems relatively shock resistant: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Jordan.

In stage two—the struggle for constitutional reform—the participation of women and other civic groups is particularly important.

Tunisia is well into the second stage, but Egypt is faltering. The shaky progress in Egyptian constitutional change is a result of marginalization of secular parties and the prohibitive interference of the military.

The stage three of change—the struggle for religious liberty—is still dormant in the region.

Women have a strong stake in religious freedom. Would the empowerment of women indirectly lead to spiritual liberty? To bring this about, women and youth movements should form a strong alliance in every Arab society.

At present, such reform is blocked. It is hard to advocate for secularism, for the right to interpret faith, to change affiliation, to marry "outsiders" and to have civil marriage.

This resistance is reinforced by several factors. Family law is under the administration of religious authority. Secularism is confused with atheism or Westernization. Religious education is dull and literal. Science education is shallow.

And international factors bolster religious triumphalism. American religious fundamentalism reinforces homegrown Arab fanatic movements. Not unrelated is the Arab-Israeli conflict, which perpetuates religious tension throughout the region. Peace between Israel and the Palestinians would facilitate interreligious harmony.

There are reasons for optimism, though.

We have already witnessed the miraculous speed of social transformation in an age of digital communication. The closer interdependence of nations in our time ought to accelerate genuine external support for the Arab Spring. The slow, but certain, withdrawal of American forces from the region will favorably impact social change. Mounting pressure for respect of universal human rights will have an effect on the Arab conscience. Another sign of hope is in the Arab youth: They are no longer ready to accept political lies.

There is still a long road ahead in the Middle East, even if a lot has been achieved so far.

Ghassan Michel Rubeiz is a former secretary of the Middle East for the Geneva-based World Council of Churches. He wrote this for Progressive Media Project, a source of liberal commentary on domestic and international issues; it is affiliated with The Progressive *magazine.*

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Breezy. Partly sunny with isolated showers. Southwest winds 20 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers. South winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼78°	▲85° ▼77°	▲86° ▼76°	▲85° ▼77°	▲86° ▼76°

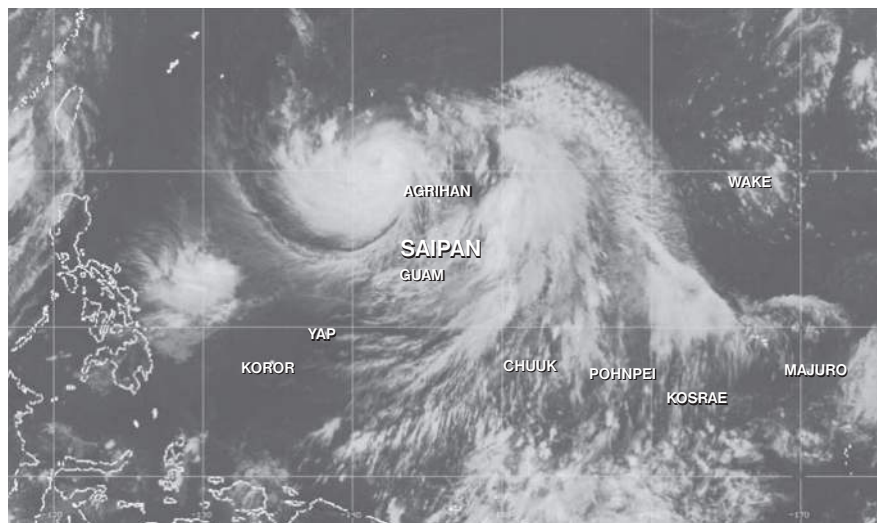
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼75
Palau	Rain	▲86	▼78
Yap	Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲82	▼77
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼74
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼77
Majuro	Rain	▲84	▼77

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲57	▼50
Beijing	Thundershowers	▲86	▼70
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲86	▼82
Honolulu	Sunny	▲86	▼75
London	Showers	▲66	▼55
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲74	▼62
Manila	Thundershowers	▲86	▼79
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲60	▼42
Miami	Thundershowers	▲89	▼79
New York	Sunny	▲89	▼70
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲93	▼77
Paris	Rain	▲69	▼53
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲82	▼73
Rome	Sunny	▲87	▼67
Salem	Showers	▲69	▼56
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲57	▼64
Seoul	Thundershowers	▲86	▼72
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲89	▼77
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲89	▼72

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, JULY 15, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Typhoon Ma-on (08W) is centered northwest of Agrihan at 20N141E. Typhoon Ma-on is moving west at 13 mph with maximum sustained winds of 125 mph. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms are found near the center west of Agrihan between 17N and 22N from 137E to 143E. Converging southwest winds south and southeast of Ma-on are producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over the Marianas to north of Chuuk between 10N and 24N from 143E to 156E. Similar weather is also found over Enewetak Atoll within 65 miles of a line from 14N159E to 10N163E. For more information on Typhoon Ma-on, see advisories issued by the National Weather Service under WMO Header WTPQ31 PGUM and bulletins from the Joint Typhoon Warning Center under WMO Header WTPN31 PGTW.A low-level circulation, the subject of a JTWC Tropical Cyclone Formation Alert is centered north of Koror near 14N133E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are present near this system west of a line from 15N134E to 11N135E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:25 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
8:14 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
3:40 PM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.4 Feet
10:4 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:55 AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	5:55 AM	6:51 PM
Monday	5:55 AM	6:51 PM
Tuesday	5:56 AM	6:51 PM
Wednesday	5:56 AM	6:51 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:33 PM	6:30 AM
Sunday	8:14 PM	7:23 AM
Monday	8:53 PM	8:14 AM
Tuesday	9:29 PM	9:03 AM
Wednesday	10:05 PM	9:50 AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 10, 2011

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	7:55am	8:45am	3, 6
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09603	3:05pm	3:55pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
5K382	6:00pm	6:50pm	2, 5, 7
C09605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
C09599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:00am	8:45am	Daily
DL297	4:35pm	7:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:30pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

MU590	4:30am	7:20am	2, 6
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:20am	11:25am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C09317/891	4:25am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:15pm	Daily via NRT
C09313/933	7:55am	8:40pm	3, 6 via GUM
C09603/933	3:05pm	8:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 via GUM
C09603/893	3:05pm	10:10pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 ICN
OZ604/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7
C09599/PR111	9:30pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ606/721	2:20am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C09603/909	3:05pm	9:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
5K168	3:25pm	6:35pm	1, 4, 6
OZ604/749	3:30pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
C09596	6:35am	7:25am	3, 6
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
5K389	1:35pm	2:25pm	1, 4, 6
C09602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	5:10pm	6:00pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:05pm	12:35am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ605	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

MU589	8:50pm	3:30am+1	1, 5
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	4, 7

GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
DL172/288	7:45am	12:35am+1	Daily via NRT
C0890/9606	10:55am	8:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:45pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:45pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0892/9596	9:55pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:25am+1	6 via GUM
PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 4, 7 via GUM
C0934/9596	10:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 4, 7 via GUM
C0934/9596	10:55pm	7:25am+1	3, 6 via GUM
C0934/9596	11:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
5K169	9:55am	5:00pm	2, 5, 7
OZ722/605	1:25pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0910/9596	10:30pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40	11:50	Daily
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

SCHEDULE OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am Chamorro, 9am English, 11am Filipino and 6pm English
Monday-Saturday: 6am Chamorro
Wednesday: 6pm Chamorro
Parish office hours:
Monday-Saturday
8am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-5pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm (PH Novena 5:45pm)
Friday: 5:30pm praying of Divine Mercy Chaplet; 6pm devotional mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
Saturday: 6am and 6pm (anticipated)
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am 6pm Tagalog mass
Parish office hours: (Fr. Celso G. Magbanua) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 8-11:30am/ 3-5:30pm, Wednesday and Friday 3-5pm.
Telephone no. 285-0273

Santa Soledad Mission Parish
Monday: 6pm
Tuesday: 6pm
Wednesday: 6pm
Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm (Youth mass/ anticipated Sunday mass)
Sunday: 7am and 9am (Children's mass)
Parish office hours: Wednesday and Friday: 8-10am,
Saturday: 4-6pm
Telephone no. 256-4568

Saint Jude Parish
Monday- Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 7am
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Parish office hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-11:30am, 3:30-5pm
Office is close every Thursday and Saturday
Telephone no. 288-0007

San Antonio Parish
Monday-Friday 6pm
Saturday: 6pm
Sunday: 7am, 9am (Blessing of children)
Parish office hours: Tuesday-Saturday: 8-11:30am, 2-4:45pm
Close on Sunday and Monday

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am Chamorro, 8am English
Monday and Tuesday:6am Chamorro
Wednesday:6pm English
Thursday: 6am Chamorro
Friday: 6am English
Saturday: 6am Chamorro, 6pm Tagalog
Sunday: anticipated mass

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am, 8am, 10am
Monday-Friday: 7pm
Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Monday- Saturday: 6am daily mass
Monday- Sunday: 3pm Divine Mercy Chaplet
Wednesday: 6pm, mass, exposition of the blessed sacrament
Saturday: 6pm, anticipated Sunday mass
Sunday: 7:30-9am English, 6pm Tagalog mass
Office hours: Monday-Wednesday: 9am-12pm, 2-5pm
Thursday: day off
Friday- Saturday: 8am-12pm, 2-5pm
Telephone no. 234-6991

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 7:30am Chamorro, 9am English
Monday: 6pm English
Tuesday: 6pm English
Wednesday: 6pm English- novena mass to our Lady of San Roque oil
Thursday: 6pm English
Friday: 6pm English- Devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus (First Fridays)
Saturday: 6am English- Our Lady's Saturday mass for the intentions of the Men and Women in military service, 6pm English- anticipated mass
Parish office hours: daily except Thursday and Sundays: 4:30-6pm
Telephone no. 322-2404, Fr. Bong's cell: 285-912, Diocesan Finance office: 234-3000 ext.143

San Vicente Parish
Monday-Friday: 6pm,
Saturday: 6pm (First Saturday of every month)
Sunday: 6am anticipated mass, 6pm (Neo Catechumenal community mass), 8pm
Sunday: 6am, 9am, 6pm
Parish office hours: daily 9-11am
Telephone no. 235-8208 or 287-0131

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 8am
Monday: 6pm (1st Mondays cemetery masses at 5:30pm)
Tuesday- Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm-anticipated Sunday mass 8-10pm
Parish office hours: Monday- Friday: 8:30am-12pm

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian
(Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm
Telephone no. 234-6026/27

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services:
Sunday: Chinese and Filipino 9am, English 6pm
Bible Study: Wednesday and Saturday 8pm
Telephone no. 235-8540

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Morning Service, Sunday, 10:00 am
Evening Service, Sunday, 6:00 pm
Children Sunday School, 10:00am/ 6:00 pm
Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, 7-9 pm
Youth Night of Worship, Friday, 6:30 pm
As Perdido Road
Chalan Piao, Saipan MP 96950
Tel. No. (670) 235-8590
Email: cornerstone@cfemcares.org

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Garapan, Plumeria Road,
Call 285-6081 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 9-11am
Sunday school/ Children's church 9am (nursery available during Sunday service)
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: 6am Tuesday GCA Kagman, Wednesday Navy Hill, Thursday San Antonio
Home Cell Bible Study: 7pm (Through out the week)
Telephone no. 322-5680

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (English)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (Tagalog)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church
Chalan Kanoa Drive, Chalan Kanoa
(east of Town Center and Beach Road, Near Mt. Carmel Cathedral)
Worship Service: 9:00am
Children's Sunday School: 9:00am
Choir Practice: 8:00am
Singspiration: 8:30am
Prayer, Care & Share: Wednesday 7:00pm
Pastor: Millie Carroll 322-6158

Immanuel Methodist Church
(Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)
(Korean Congregation)
Sunday worship: 9am, 10:30, 1pm
Wednesday evening service: 8pm
Daily morning prayer: 5am

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
Sunday English Service: 7:30-9am,
Sunday Tagalog Service: 9-11am and 6-8pm,
Wednesday: 7:30-9pm

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9:20am
Sunday Adult: 11am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1
for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Marianas Bible Fellowship Center
Sunday School: 9-9:30am
Divine Worship: 9:30-11am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ (4th Watch)
Sunday worship 8:30am
Sunday evening 7:00pm
Prayer meeting, every Wednesday 7:30pm
San Jose village, after San Jose Hotel
Telephone: 789-7566

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 10-11am
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 6-7pm
Thursday Bible Study: 7pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church Koblerville
Sunday services:
Sunday school 9:00am
Morning worship 10:00am
Evening service 6:00pm
Wednesday evening bible study 7:00pm

Chinese services
Sunday morning 10:00am
Sunday evening 7:00pm

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church.
Telephone No: 285-4661/2

Thy Word Ministries Saipan
Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi

Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian
Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Formerly God's Victorious Army)
Sunday 8:30am to 10:30am - Worship Service
Monday 7:00 pm - Women's Fellowship
Tuesday nights - Home cellgroup
Wednesday - 7:30pm to 9:00pm Mid Week Service
Friday 7:30pm to 9:00pm Prayer Meeting
Saturday nights - Praise and worship practice
Last Friday of the month - Overnight praying meeting
Pastor Brendon Perez - Tel# 2359246

Editor's Note: Information subject to change without prior notice. All information provided by the respective churches. If you want your church or religious activities included or to report changes and errors, call *Saipan Tribune* at 235-6397 or 235-2440 or email editor@saipantribune.com.

Business

Debt talks: Dire warnings, a possible compromise?

WASHINGTON (AP)—With time growing short and warnings more dire, the first, fragile signs emerged Thursday of a possible compromise to raise the nation's debt limit and avert a potentially catastrophic default on Aug. 2.

Under a plan discussed by the Senate's top two leaders, President Barack Obama would receive enhanced authority to raise the debt ceiling at the same time procedures would be set in motion that could lead to federal spending cuts.

Word that Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky were at work on the fallback plan came as Obama and congressional leaders held a fifth straight day of debt-crisis talks at the White House.

McConnell pronounced the session a good one. "We're going to continue to discuss a way forward over the next couple of days and see what happens," he said.

Obama was having his say on Friday, scheduling his second White House news conference of the week.

House Republicans and Democrats scheduled closed-door meetings of the rank and file to review the spending cuts and tax increases proposed by one side or the other so far.

After weeks of political turmoil, it appeared attempts to avoid a default were proceeding along two tracks—the White House negotiations that appeared near an end, and the fallback that officials said privately presented the stronger opportunity to avert a crisis.

One Republican, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that in the White House talks so far, negotiators had agreed on about $1.5 trillion in deficit cuts, far less than the $2.4 trillion or so needed to meet Obama's demand that the debt limit go up enough to tide the Treasury over through the 2012 elections.

A summary that House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Va., prepared for the talks earlier in the week showed the bulk of cuts coming from day-to-day operating budgets of federal programs.

Also included were as much as $245 billion from Medicare, including higher premiums for wealthier beneficiaries, and additional savings from skilled nursing homes and home health care. The summary indicated that federal workers would pay more for their pensions, agriculture subsidies would be cut and food stamp spending would be restrained.

Two officials said Cantor did not speak during the day's session, after irritating Obama on Wednesday by repeatedly proposing a short-term debt limit increase the president has vowed to veto.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

S&P warns it may downgrade US credit rating

WASHINGTON (AP)—Credit rating agency Standard & Poor's said on Thursday that there is a 50 percent chance it will downgrade the U.S. government's credit rating within three months because of the congressional impasse over approving an increase in the debt ceiling. In a statement, the rating agency said it is placing the United States on a credit watch with at least a one-in-two likelihood that it will lower the country's debt rating within the next 90 days. On Wednesday, Moody's Investors Service said it is reviewing the government's triple-A bond rating.

Murdochs to be questioned in UK; FBI opens review

LONDON (AP)—Rupert Murdoch and his son James first refused, then agreed Thursday to appear before U.K. lawmakers investigating phone hacking and police bribery, while in the U.S., the FBI opened a review into allegations the Murdoch media empire sought to hack into the phones of Sept. 11 victims. Those two developments—and the arrest of another former editor of a Murdoch tabloid—deepened the crisis for News Corp. Murdoch defended News Corp.'s handling of the scandal, saying it will recover from any damage caused by the phone-hacking and police bribery allegations.

Ron Paul's new TV ad opposes raising debt limit

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Republican presidential hopeful Ron Paul is using his first campaign television ad to promote his long-time opposition to raising the federal debt limit. In the ad released Thursday and set to run in early primary states, the Texas congressman criticizes both Republicans and Democrats for striking deals in the past and says Congress should not compromise this time. Paul also notes that he always has voted against raising the federal limit on borrowing. President Barack Obama has said that if a deal to raise the debt ceiling is not passed by Aug. 2, the U.S. government could default on its loans, creating a financial crisis.

Nation

NYC man held in boy's slaying says he hears voices

NEW YORK (AP)—A man accused of kidnapping, killing and dismembering an 8-year-old boy who asked him for directions was ordered Thursday to undergo a psychological evaluation after his lawyer told a judge that his client might be mentally ill.

"He has indicated to me that he hears voices and has had some hallucinations," said the attorney, Pierre Bazile. Levi Aron, 35, pleaded not guilty to charges of murder and kidnapping as prosecutors said he lured Leiby Kletzky to his home Monday after the little boy got lost while walking home from an Orthodox Jewish day camp.

Video cameras captured the fateful encounter between the two on a Brooklyn street, while Leiby's mother waited anxiously just a few blocks away. Detectives later found the boy's severed feet, wrapped in plastic, in the man's freezer, as well as a cutting board and three bloody carving knives.

At his arraignment Thursday afternoon, Aron appeared disheveled, confused and pale. He stayed quiet during the brief court proceeding. As he was led out of the courthouse holding cells, other inmates screamed obscenities at him. He was held without bail, placed on suicide watch and protective custody after his lawyers said they feared he could do harm to himself.

Aron

Police and prosecutors said Aron, a clerk at a hardware supply store, has confessed to suffocating the boy with a bath towel, but they continued to work on verifying his horrific and bizarre explanation for the boy's death.

At the Kletzky household, his family also looked for answers, too.

"Why?" asked Shmuel Eckstein, a close family friend, as the boy's parents and four sisters sat and prayed. "We don't have that ... What we know is that through Leiby's death, God is sending us a huge signal—that we're doing something terribly wrong. And we're looking for what it is."

He added that the family was not looking for retribution.

"We're not into revenge," he said.

At a news conference, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said Aron told investigators that after taking Leiby off the street Monday, he brought the boy to a wedding in the suburb of Monsey, nearly 35 miles away, and spent several hours there.

Other wedding guests confirmed Aron was there but didn't see the boy, the commissioner added.

By the time the pair returned to the city, it was so late that Aron decided to take Leiby to his home to sleep and left him there Tuesday while he went to work, according to the police version of the confession. Kelly said the hardware supply store confirmed that Aron showed up as usual that day.

Aron told police he killed Leiby when he got home after being spooked by a massive search for the boy in Borough Park section of Brooklyn, home to one of the world's largest communities of Orthodox Jews outside of Israel.

Astronauts woken up by second computer failure

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—After getting a little free time Thursday, the last space shuttle crew was woken up to deal with a second computer failure on Atlantis.

The astronauts switched to another of the five main computers on board, and NASA said the shuttle was in "stable condition with no concerns for the crew's safety." A computer had also failed on Sunday.

The crew had gone to bed late Thursday afternoon, but Mission Control woke them up about 1 1/2 hours later because of the failed computer. NASA said they would troubleshoot the problem on Friday.

Sunday's computer glitch occurred just before the shuttle linked up with the International Space Station. Engineers said the problem was likely caused by a bad switch throw. That computer was working again Monday after new software was installed.

The check-and-balance network of computers provides redundancy during the most critical phases of the mission, and will be needed when Atlantis lands next week to cloe out the 30-year shuttle era.

Earlier Thursday, the crew got some time off after a hectic week to savor their historic experience.

"This is one of the first days we've been able to take a deep breath and appreciate what we're doing up here," said shuttle commander, Christopher Ferguson.

Until Thursday, the workload in orbit was so intense that the four astronauts had only fleeting moments of realizing "wow, this is really it," astronaut Rex Walheim said in a series of TV interviews.

"But boy, it's going to hit when we land and wheels stop," he added.

AP

DRUG BUST

Drug Enforcement Agency assistant special agent Paul Rozario speaks during a news conference announcing the state's largest methamphetamine bust in history, Thursday, July 14, 2011, in Las Vegas. Eight illegal immigrants from Mexico were arrested on drug trafficking charges after federal and Las Vegas law enforcement officials seized 212 pounds of drugs worth an estimated street value of $5.7 million. Police also seized $280,000 in cash, six guns and nine vehicles used for drug trafficking after searching nine residential properties in Las Vegas and Henderson on Tuesday. The raid yielded four pounds of heroin and 208 pounds of methamphetamine in varying stages of processing.

Feds want 'don't ask, don't tell' halt stayed

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The federal government asked the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals on Thursday to reconsider its order last week demanding an immediate halt to the enforcement of the ban on openly gay troops in the military.

The Obama administration filed the emergency motion in response to the appeals court's decision last week to lift its stay of a lower court's ruling last year that found the ban, known as "don't ask, don't tell," unconstitutional.

Department of Justice lawyers said in the motion that ending the ban now would pre-empt the "orderly process" for rolling back the 17-year-old policy as outlined in the law passed and signed by the president in December.

"Congress made quite clear that it believed the terms of the transition were critical to the credibility and success of this historic policy change, and to ensure continued military effectiveness," according to a statement from the Justice Department.

"Any court-ordered action forced upon the military services so close to the completion of this repeal policy pre-empts the deliberate process established by Congress and the President to ensure an orderly and successful transition of this significant policy change," the department said.

ACROSS THE NATION

Bound woman found hanging at Calif. mansion

SAN DIEGO (AP)—The girlfriend of a pharmaceutical company CEO was found dead at a historic California mansion, her nude body hanging from a balcony with her hands tied behind her back and her feet bound, investigators said Thursday. Rebecca Nalepa, 32, was discovered at the Coronado home of her boyfriend, Jonah Shacknai, chairman and chief executive of Medicis Pharmaceuticals Corp., an Arizona-based company that makes acne and facial wrinkle treatments. Investigators have not determined if Nalepa was a crime victim and have not ruled out suicide, said San Diego County sheriff's Capt. Tim Curran. He declined to comment on the evidence.

AP source: FBI reviews News Corp. 9/11 phone claim

NEW YORK (AP)—The FBI has begun a preliminary inquiry based on concerns in Congress over a report that media mogul Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. sought to hack into the phones of Sept. 11 victims, a law enforcement official said Thursday. The decision to step in was made after U.S. Rep. Peter King and several other members of Congress wrote to FBI Director Robert Mueller demanding an investigation, said the official, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the official wasn't authorized to speak publicly. The official stressed that the review was in its infancy but declined to discuss the scope of it or say what steps had been taken.

Balloon boy parents auction off UFO-like craft

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (AP)—A silver, UFO-like helium balloon that gripped the country's attention when a couple said their son had floated away in it is back in Colorado after an online auction. An attorney for Richard and Mayumi Heene told the Coloradoan in Fort Collins Thursday that an Aurora man paid $2,502 earlier this month for the balloon. Perry Rausher says the man didn't want his name released because he plans a news conference. Rausher says he deducted $60 from the sale for fees and the rest will go to Japanese earthquake and tsunami relief. The Heenes, who moved to Florida from Colorado after the incident, were charged when it was discovered their 6-year-old son was never on the balloon.

Delta planes collide on runway at Boston airport

BOSTON (AP)—The wing of a Delta jet has clipped the tail of an aircraft that provides regional air service for the carrier while both planes were on the runway in Boston. Boston Logan International Airport spokesman Phil Orlandella says one person is complaining of neck pain after a Delta Boeing 767 jet hit the other plane Thursday evening. There were no other injuries. Delta spokesman Trebor Banstetter says the wing from Delta Flight 266 from Boston to Amsterdam hit the vertical stabilizer of Atlantic Southeast Airlines Flight 4904, also on departure from Boston to Raleigh-Durham. The Delta jet returned to the gate and ASA passengers were transported by bus to the terminal.

Police raid NJ home of Calif. art theft suspect

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—A man accused of stealing a valuable Picasso drawing from a San Francisco gallery had about $500,000 worth of other stolen artwork in his New Jersey apartment, including another Picasso, police said Thursday. Authorities raided the Hoboken home of Mark Lugo on Wednesday after Lugo made a phone call Tuesday from the San Francisco jail to a female friend in Pennsylvania, Hoboken police Detective Sgt. Edwin Pantoja said. Armed with a search warrant, authorities said they found a Picasso drawing worth $350,000 that had been reported stolen from a New York hotel, among six other pieces around Lugo's apartment.

Officials: 40 fish populations being overfished

PORTLAND, Maine (AP)—Forty stocks of fish populations are subject to overfishing in U.S. waters, but progress is being made to rebuild stocks and reduce overfishing, federal officials said Thursday. The number of fish populations being fished at too high of a level at the end of 2010 was up by two from 2009, according to an annual report from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Among the stocks being overfished are cod in the Northeast, red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico and Pacific bluefin tuna off the West coast. But officials said many key populations of fish have shown improvement over the years.

Asia

Indonesian volcano erupts

TOMOHON, Indonesia (AP)—A volcano in central Indonesia spit lava and smoke high into the air early Friday, sending thousands of panicked residents racing down its fiery slopes. One woman died of a heart attack as she fled, but there were no immediate reports of other casualties.

Mount Lokon, located in northern Sulawesi province, unleashed its first powerful eruption at 10:46 p.m. Thursday, said Brian Rulrone, a disaster management agency official. That blast was followed by a second just after midnight and a third at 1:10 a.m. Friday.

Glowing lava cascaded from the mouth of the crater, setting trees ablaze along the western slope, said Ferry Rusmawan, an official at the nearest monitoring post, adding that activity remained high and another eruption appeared imminent.

The 5,741-foot (1,750-meter) mountain continued to rumble late Friday morning.

Soldiers and police helped rescuers evacuate residents living along the mountain's fertile slopes, said Jimmy Eman, the acting mayor in the nearby town of Tomohon, adding that the only victim so far was the 56-year-old woman who died of a heart attack.

More than 6,000 people were crammed into schools, churches and other temporary shelters.

"This is the largest eruption I've ever experienced," said Nelson Uada, who was among those evacuated overnight. "It was very scary. Glowing lava flowed like flames in the darkness and it sounded like we were in a war."

There were disruptions to air travel in the area.

Indonesia, a vast archipelago of 240 million people, is prone to earthquakes and volcanoes because it sits along the Pacific "Ring of Fire," a horseshoe-shaped string of faults that lines the Pacific Ocean.

Mount Lokon, which has been on high alert for nearly a week, is one of the country's 129 active volcanos.

Its last major eruption in 1991 killed a Swiss hiker and forced thousands of people to flee their homes.

Threatened snow leopards are found in parts of Afghanistan

BANGKOK (AP)—A healthy population of snow leopards, elusive big cats threatened across their homes in the mountain ranges of Central Asia, has been found in one of the few peaceful areas of Afghanistan, a wildlife group said.

Camera traps documented the secretive, usually solitary animals at 16 different locations across the Wakhan Corridor, a long panhandle in northeastern Afghanistan free from the insurgency that plagues most of the country, the World Conservation Society said in a statement seen Friday.

Listed as globally threatened, only some 4,500 to 7,500 snow leopards exist, scattered across a dozen nations in the high mountain ranges of Central Asia. The cats are poached for their pelts and killed by shepherds guarding their flocks upon which the leopards sometimes prey.

The sleek, fuzzy-tailed leopards are also captured for the pet trade, while an increasing demand for their penises and bones in China, where some believe they enhance sexual performance, has also led to their decimation.

"This is a wonderful discovery. It shows that there is real hope for snow leopards in Afghanistan. Now our goal is to ensure that these magnificent animals have a secure future as part of Afghanistan's natural heritage," Peter Zahler, the World Conservation Society's deputy Asia director, said in the statement.

ASIA BRIEFS

India warns: End to terrorism can't be guaranteed

MUMBAI, India (AP)—The triple bombing that killed 17 in the heart of India's financial capital sparked anger Thursday over the government's inability to prevent terror strikes despite overhauling security forces after the 2008 Mumbai siege. Indian officials say they have made extraordinary security reforms since 10 Pakistani terrorists rampaged across the city nearly three years ago, but following Wednesday's attack they warned they may never be able to guarantee a terror-free nation in a region plagued by extremism. No terror group claimed responsibility—and investigators had no immediate suspects—in the bombings that shook three separate neighborhoods within minutes during Wednesday's busy evening rush.

Bomber hits service for Afghan leader's brother

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A man hiding explosives in his turban blew himself up Thursday inside a mosque where Afghan officials were attending a memorial service for the president's assassinated half brother, killing five people. The attack in Kandahar city heightens fears that security in the already volatile south will unravel with the death of Ahmed Wali Karzai, who was considered the region's most powerful man. The Sarra Jamai mosque had been filled with relatives and friends of Wali Karzai, two days after he was shot at close range by a confidant at his home.

Navies to float science robots in pirate waters

SYDNEY (AP)—Driven away by Somali pirates, international scientists are asking the Australian and U.S. navies for a favor: deploy 19 robotic instruments in the Indian Ocean to record critical data on climate and monsoon. The Australian and British robots will be deployed by the two navies over the next six months, said Ann Threhser, a lead scientist at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Australia's national science agency. The robots collect key data used for forecasting monsoon and rainfall in Australia and South Asia.

Petraeus meets Pakistan's army chief amid tensions

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Gen. David Petraeus, the outgoing U.S. commander in Afghanistan, and his soon-to-be successor met with top military leaders in Pakistan on Thursday as the two countries struggled to resolve tensions over the American raid that killed Osama bin Laden. Petraeus and Marine Lt. Gen. John Allen's visit was part of a flurry over meetings between diplomats and military leaders of the two countries since the May 2 strike against the al-Qaida chief in the northwest Pakistani garrison town of Abbottabad. Pakistani civilian and military leaders are angry over the raid because the Americans did not warn them about it, although they insist they had no idea the terror leader was on their soil.

World

17 JUNE
4 JULY
CLUSTER OF WHITE OBJECTS CONSISTENT WITH REPORTS OF BODY BAGS
LIGHT VEHICLES
Satellite Sentinel Project
Harvard Humanitarian Initiative
DIGITAL GLOBE
enough
COMPARISION: 17 JUNE - 4 JULY 2011 | FIG 4
OBJECT CLUSTER IN KADUGLI TOWN | KADUGLI, SOUTH KORDOFAN

AP

In this Digital Globe satellite images made available by the US monitoring group the Satellite Sentinel Project Thursday July 14 2011 and analyzed by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, a site in Kadugli town in a sealed-off region of Sudan appears to be a mass grave, offering the first aerial photographs from a conflict zone that outside observers can't access.

Satellite evidence indicates many mass graves in Sudan

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Sudan activists on Thursday called for the United States and the international community to intervene in a region of Sudan inaccessible to outsiders after a U.S. group released satellite photos of what they said appear to be mass graves.

Details about mass graves, aerial bombardments and other violence in the same South Kordofan region are described separately in an internal June report by Sudan's U.N. peacekeeping mission that was circulating Thursday at United Nations headquarters in New York.

The Satellite Sentinel Project images show what appear to be freshly dug sites in South Kordofan state, where Sudan's Arab military has been targeting a black ethnic minority loyal to the military of the newly independent Republic of South Sudan. A witness told the project that he saw 100 bodies or more put into one of the pits.

"The DigitalGlobe satellite images contain many of the details and hallmarks of the mass atrocities described by at least five eyewitnesses to the alleged killings," said Nathaniel A. Raymond, of the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, which analyzes the project's images.

Fighting broke out in the region on June 5. Neither the U.N., outside aid groups nor journalists have access to the region, raising fears that more violence is being carried out than is known publicly.

"The problem is that we cannot confirm or deny what is going on because we cannot get into those areas," said U.N. peacekeeping spokesman Michel Bonnardeaux. "And that's even more the case now that we no longer have a mandate there."

The report was written by the human rights section of the UNMIS peacekeeping mission before its mandate expired on the eve of South Sudan's secession from the north on Saturday.

Despite its name, South Kordofan is in the north and the Sudanese government refused to renew the mandate of peacekeepers inside its territory after the south seceded.

South Sudan wants a U.N. force on its side of the border and the U.N. is currently putting together a proposed new mission for the south. The U.N. Security Council recently authorized a new 4,200-strong peacekeeping force to be temporarily deployed along the border for six months in the oil-rich Abyei region.

The unpublished U.N. peacekeeping document reported significant rights violations in the South Kordofan area, including executions, abductions, house-to-house searches and systematic destruction of homes. It said a U.N. mission staff member detained by Sudanese troops told of seeing about 150 bodies around the military compound.

WORLD BRIEFS

Mubarak denies responsibility for protester deaths

CAIRO (AP)—Ousted President Hosni Mubarak has denied any responsibility for his security forces killing nearly 900 protesters during Egypt's uprising, according to a transcript of his interrogation published on Thursday. Asked to explain the killings, Mubarak dismissed the lethal crackdown by saying: "Our people and our security are like that." Mubarak, 83, is in custody in an Egyptian hospital. He faces charges of ordering the use of deadly force against demonstrators during the 18-day revolt that swept him from power in February.

Libya denies report Gadhafi would blow up Tripoli

MOSCOW (AP)—The Libyan government is denying a Russian newspaper report that allegedly quoted the Kremlin's special envoy to Libya as saying Moammar Gadhafi has threatened to blow up Tripoli if it falls into rebel hands. Kremlin envoy Mikhail Margelov was quoted in Thursday's edition of the Izvestia newspaper as saying Libyan Prime Minister Al-Baghdadi al-Mahmudi recently told him "if the rebels seize the city, we will deluge it with missiles and blow it up." But Libyan government spokesman Moussa Ibrahim later denied the report, saying Gadhafi's government would never destroy Tripoli or any other Libyan city. He said Margelov's office also told him they never issued any such statement.

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, July 16, 2011

SE Asia walks tightrope amid sea spats with China

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—About the same time that China's defense chief was clinking wine glasses with Manila's military brass in May, three Chinese navy ships were erecting a steel post about 180 miles (290 kilometers) offshore to fortify their claim to a reef in the disputed South China Sea, according to a Philippines military report.

A recent series of flare-ups over the possibly resource-rich waters raises an age-old question for China's smaller Southeast Asian neighbors: Is China more a friend, with all the benefits that trade and aid is bringing, or more a foe?

The stakes appear to be rising. Both Vietnam and the Philippines accused Chinese ships of interfering with energy exploration efforts this year. Earlier incidents typically involved harassment of fishing boats in the contested waters.

It's unclear what sparked the uptick in confrontations, but one factor may be China pushing back against what it sees as U.S. interference in the disputes, as the two powers become rivals in the Pacific. The South China Sea is a vital shipping lane that the U.S. Navy patrolled virtually uncontested for decades.

Twice since May, Vietnam says, China cut cables used by its ships to conduct seismic tests of the sea bottom. In March, two Chinese naval ships threatened a Filipino ship exploring for gas in an area known as Reed Bank. China hasn't admitted cutting cables but acknowledges incidents took place and says they were in its waters.

The confrontations are testing the ability of both countries to maintain good relations with China while standing up to its growing naval power and territorial claims.

Though the skirmishing at sea appears to have ended amid a flurry of diplomatic activity, the underlying issues remain unresolved and are a likely source of friction at an Asian security forum in Bali, Indonesia, this month.

"I think the thermostat is being set," said Carlyle Thayer, a Vietnam expert at the University of New South Wales in Australia who studies the South China Sea disputes. "We now have to see if the tensions will cool down. If it doesn't work, then we're in for trouble."

The sparring is over the Spratlys, nearby Paracels and Scarborough Shoal, a slew of tiny, mostly uninhabited islands, some no more than a half-submerged coral reef and surrounding waters. China claims the entire area, a large swath extending far from its southern coast and overlapping with the 230-mile (370-kilometer) exclusive economic zones of the Philippines and Vietnam and, to a lesser degree, of Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

The United States irked China last year by asserting that Washington had a national security interest in the peaceful resolution of the disputes.

"I believe that individual countries are actually playing with fire, and I hope that fire will not be drawn to the United States," Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai warned last month.

China has called for bilateral negotiations to solve the disputes, a strategy that would effectively shut out the U.S. or ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Its smaller neighbors favor a multilateral approach to give them more clout.

There have been 11 reported incidents this year, including the three that targeted oil and gas exploration, according to the Philippines and Vietnam. They began in late February and continued through June. Both countries responded by deploying armed escorts to protect their explorations.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino III told The Associated Press in June that the exploration at Reed Bank, about 90 miles (150 kilometers) from the Philippine coast, has been completed and turned up "very good" prospects.

Beijing accuses the two countries of encroaching on its territory and undermining China's interests. Liu Jianchao, the Chinese ambassador to Manila, warned last month that any oil exploration in the region should not proceed without Beijing's permission. He held out the possibility of joint exploration with China.

Chaos threatens Philippines' cultural treasures

By C ECIL MORELLA
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

INQUIRER

In this photo taken June 9, 2011, a tourist takes a photograph of the restored painting of Juan Luna 1884 oil-on-canvas "Spoliarium", at the National Museum in Manila.

MANILA, Philippines—Thieves and art dealers are the usual suspects, but mildew and flashbulbs are just as dangerous for some of the Philippines' beleaguered cultural treasures.

From a 30,000-year-old skull fragment of one of its first human inhabitants to imposing churches built during Spanish colonial rule, the Southeast Asian archipelago has a stunning display of artifacts showcasing its diverse history.

But they are under threat on every front.

Even at the National Museum where half a million archaeological items are supposed to be protected, a lack of funds means they could be as vulnerable as treasures outside its walls, said its chief conservator Orlando Abinion.

"They are in danger, yes, they are prone to deterioration, robbery, vandalism," Abinion told AFP inside the rundown hallways of one of the museum's twin 85-year-old neoclassical buildings in the historic old quarter of Manila.

Abinion has devoted the past 10 years to preserving and restoring the museum collections, which include 100,000-plus ethnographs, 1,500 pieces of art and hundreds of thousands of preserved plant and animal species.

He said he was severely limited by an annual conservation budget of less than P1 million (less than $23,000), but there had been some inspiring victories.

One of his biggest achievements was saving the "Spoliarium", a four-by-seven-meter (301-square-foot) oil-on-poplar painted in 1884 by revered Filipino artist Juan Luna that had been badly damaged by heat and humidity.

Depicting dead gladiators set to be stripped of their worldly possessions, the masterpiece symbolizes the crystallization of Filipino yearning for independence from the Spanish that, in 1897, would escalate into an uprising.

"The 'Spoliarium' is now stable, it's in good condition," Abinion said proudly.

Similar issues hound the National Library, which moved to its present building near the museum at the other end of the Manila park in 1961 with the remnants of a collection decimated during World War II.

Operating on a budget so small that air-conditioning has to be shut down on the weekends, the collection is under threat from fungus, said German conservationist Monika Schneider-Gast.

"It will cost a lot of money to change conditions because they have to rewire the library and have to change the air-conditioning," the consultant told AFP as she worked on two frayed and mouldy late 19th-century books.

Written by national hero Jose Rizal, the books—"Noli Me Tangere" (Touch Me Not) and "El Filibusterismo" (Reign of Greed)—were trenchant criticisms of the Spanish colonial government.

The Spanish executed Rizal, then 35, by firing squad in 1896 for writing the books, sparking an armed revolution.

Anne Rosette Crelencia, the library's rare books and manuscripts section chief, said it had taken a special meeting with the budget minister to get the government to fork out a little money for the Rizal project that was mainly funded by Germany.

Crelencia said she understood that the library may not be the top priority for the Philippines' economic managers as they battle chronic poverty that sees a quarter of the population living on a dollar a day or less.

"Although we need the funds, the country is facing many problems too," she said.

Nevertheless, she said the library urgently needed more funds to complete the archiving of its most precious collection, 400,000 pages recording the Philippine revolution against the Spanish.

The documents give an intimate window into the revolt—from the major decisions down to the meal allowances of specific guerrilla units—that ultimately failed when Spain ceded the colony to the United States in 1898.

Crelencia said sections of the collection were stolen many years ago—allegedly by scholars given special access to the papers at the library for their research—and sold to private collectors by unscrupulous dealers.

Outside of the supposedly protected zones of the library and museum, it is almost impossible for authorities to save many cultural treasures from thieves.

The museum's Abinion listed 55 archaeological sites, including Roman Catholic churches and undersea wrecks, that were under threat.

"Bounty hunters at times beat us to the wrecks," he said.

They include the San Diego, a Spanish galleon sunk by the Dutch in a 1600 battle and discovered in deep waters near Manila in 1991.

Abinion said it was looted as the museum waited for government approval for its preservation.

Some sites, such as about 200 man-made burial caves in the town of Kabayan with human remains mummified before the colonial era, have been declared by the United Nations as World Heritage Sites.

But neither the sanctity of the dead nor the threat of eternal damnation has foiled robbers, who carried off several Kabayan mummies in 2001-2002, as well as religious icons on public display on Catholic churches, Abinion said.

Abinion said the Philippine parliament last year approved a National Cultural Heritage Act that significantly increased penalties for stealing, selling and exporting cultural treasures.

The law imposes maximum jail terms of 10 years and fines of at least P200,000 (about $4,651).

However Abinion said the law was not yet in force because the government still had not drawn up and approved its implementing rules and regulations.

In the meantime, the law it was supposed to replace remains in effect, prescribing a maximum fine of just P500 ($11.63) and no prison time.

"Our laws are very lax," Abinion said.

Philippine bishops say sorry, return donated SUVs

By TERESA CEROJANO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine Roman Catholic bishops embroiled in a scandal involving allegedly inappropriate donations on Wednesday returned vehicles they received as gifts from the government's charity funds.

The donations took place during the administration of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who sought support of several influential bishops while she faced public protests and fended off several coup attempts on charges of electoral cheating and corruption.

She stepped down last year after nine years in power. She has denied any wrongdoing and did not comment on the latest scandal as she was traveling abroad. The bishops have apologized but maintain they did not break a law prohibiting the use of state funds for religious purposes.

The chairman of the state-run Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Margie Juico, told a Senate hearing last week that an audit showed that at least 6.9 million pesos ($158,600) in charity funds were used to buy vehicles upon the request of several bishops.

The government's lotto operator also runs charity funds.

At the Senate inquiry Wednesday, the bishops turned over four vehicles to charity officials and said other vehicles in the southern Philippines were in the process of being returned.

The bishops offered their apology for the pain the scandal has caused their followers and the dominant church. But they maintained the donations were only solicited to help them extend services to their far-flung communities.

"Even if it is not unlawful and even if it is not unconstitutional, we believe that it is important for us to clear everything in the air and return the vehicles," said Archbishop Orlando Quevedo of the southern Cotabato diocese.

Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos of southern Butuan city admitted that he wrote Arroyo to ask for a Mitsubishi Montero sport utility vehicle that costs 1.7 million pesos ($39,000) for his 66th birthday in 2009 to help him reach remote areas and promote peace on Mindanao Island, which is wracked by insurgency.

He said that service to the public motivated him to write Arroyo—a move which he acknowledged "was a lapse in judgment on my part" that has "cast a shadow of uncertainty on my dignity as a bishop and my moral ascendancy as a leader of the Catholic church."

Outside the Senate, some 50 protesters held placards, some wearing bishops' frock and cardboard replicas of SUVs around their waist.

"I need my SUV to reach moral high ground," one placard said.

The church has been a powerful political force in the Philippines, helping organize mass protests that toppled late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and in 2001, President Joseph Estrada on corruption charges. He was succeeded by Arroyo, his vice president.

Hi Senator Birthday Ko Ngayon
Sabi NI LORD 4x4 eh!
I need my SUV to reach the Moral High Ground
Don't judge us. We'll judge you!
Nagsor ka ako oks ma la tayo?

AP

Protesters dressed as Roman Catholic bishops, display placards and SUV cutouts, picketing the Philippine Senate Wednesday July 13, 2011 to coincide with the hearing on a scandal involving alleged illegal donations received by some bishops friendly to ex-President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo from the government's lottery operator, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office or PCSO, in Manila, Philippines.

2 ex-PCSO execs shut up, cite poor health, ridicule

By CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Two former officials of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office on Thursday invoked family, public ridicule, poor health and their constitutional right against self-incrimination at the congressional inquiry into the alleged misuse of agency funds.

But the tearful pleas of former PCSO General Manager Rosario Uriarte and former PCSO promotions manager Manuel Garcia did not prevent the Senate blue ribbon committee from scrutinizing their supposed liabilities.

"The adverse public perception, which I and my family continue to endure, and worse, my indictment for a serious crime, have become unbearable and prejudicial not only to my family but (also) to my rights under the Constitution," Uriarte read from a prepared statement.

"Have mercy on my family, not to me anymore," she said.

Uriarte, who may face plunder charges for her role in the allegedly illegal disbursement of some P325 million in PCSO intelligence funds, said she was willing to appear at the proper forum where she "can confront the witnesses."

Uriarte testified before the blue ribbon committee on July 7 that then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed PCSO board resolutions in 2008-2010 approving the allocation of hundreds of millions of pesos in charity funds for intelligence operations.

Garcia, who is accused of getting more than P1 billion in kickbacks from the agency's ad placements during the Arroyo administration, said he had been advised by his lawyer not to discuss the matter anymore, owing to the separate tax evasion and criminal cases filed against him. He denied the allegation.

"I plead to be excused from this investigation not only because of those cases… but also for humanitarian reasons," Garcia said, his voice cracking.

Very stressful

"I am very sick. I am suffering from acute hypertension. My doctors advised me to avoid stressful situations. This investigation is very stressful and it can be life-threatening to me, more so because of the seriousness of the allegation against me," Garcia said.

But Senator Teofisto Guingona III, the blue ribbon committee chairman, reminded both Uriarte and Garcia that they could not invoke a "blanket" right against self-incrimination.

Sen. Franklin Drilon later interrogated Uriarte, who was also suffering from hypertension, on the P4.5-million increase in her assets from 2007 to 2008, based on her statement of assets, liabilities and net worth.

Drilon noted that Uriarte's assets were worth P6.1 million in 2007, but jumped to P10.6 million the following year. Yet her income tax return (ITR) showed an income of only P610,536 in 2008.

Allowances, kickbacks

Uriarte replied that her ITR did not include the allowances she had received from the PCSO, which, combined with her salary, amounted to about P2.6 million.

But she said PCSO accountants had told her that the allowances were not taxable and did not have to be declared in the ITR.

"I will accept (the explanation) at face value," said Drilon, who then asked Uriarte to explain the discrepancy between her P2.6-million earnings and the P4.6-million increase in her assets three years ago.

Uriarte chose to remain silent, but she later readily agreed to submit her bank records during the years in question in subsequent committee hearings.

Guingona also sought to dig up pieces of properties owned by Garcia in connection with the ad kickbacks he had allegedly pocketed from complainants Alexander Quisumbing and Ludovico Yuseco, two ad executives who used to transact with him.

Last week, Quisumbing, the chairman and CEO of Quizgem, and Yuseco, the manager of Cross-Channel Advertising, told the Senate committee that Garcia had demanded a 40-percent kickback from the contract price, less the 12-percent value-added tax and the 10-percent withholding tax.

Quisumbing confirmed what he stated in his May 18 affidavit that he gave Garcia some P16.1 million from 2006 to 2008.

Yuseco also confirmed his May 18 affidavit that he gave the former PCSO advertising and promotions manager P12.6 million from 2008 to 2010.

BMW 350

At Thursday's hearing, Guingona came up with a PowerPoint presentation showing pictures of Garcia's house in Barangay (village) Don Manuel in Quezon City, a Toyota Fortuner, a BMW 350 and a Honda Civic.

Guingona apparently wanted to provide the contrast between the properties and Garcia's monthly salary of only around P70,000 monthly at the PCSO.

Garcia said the house had been inherited from his father-in-law, while the Fortuner had been purchased as part of a PCSO car plan.

He said the BMW belonged to his daughter, while the Civic was owned by his son, who was in the car buy-and-sell business.

Philippines warns against gecko as AIDS treatment

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines warned Friday against using geckos to treat AIDS and impotence, saying the folkloric practice in parts of Asia may put patients at risk.

Environmental officials have also expressed alarm about the growing trade in the wall-climbing lizards in the Philippines. An 11-ounce (300-gram) gecko reportedly sells for at least 50,000 pesos ($1,160).

Geckos are reportedly exported to Malaysia, China and South Korea, where they are used as aphrodisiacs and as traditional medicine for asthma, AIDS, cancer, tuberculosis and impotence.

A health department statement said Friday that the use of geckos as treatments has no scientific basis and could be dangerous because patients might not seek proper treatment for their diseases.

"This is likely to aggravate their overall health and put them at greater risk," it added.

Treatments for asthma are easily available and affordable, while there are antiviral drugs to control the progress of HIV, it added.

Geckos are carnivorous, nocturnal reptiles from the family Gekkonidae that are found in tropical countries. They are known for their sticky footpads that allow them to climb vertical surfaces, including glass.

Wildlife official Mundita Lim said her office has asked law enforcers to look into the possibility that scammers may have infiltrated the trade because of the exorbitant prices being quoted online by buyers demanding geckos weighing at least 400 grams (14 ounces).

She said geckos in the wild grow up to 200 grams (7 ounces). Those fattened in captivity can grow only up to 300 grams (10 ounces).

Environment Secretary Ramon Paje earlier warned that collecting and trading geckos without permit can be punishable by up to four years in jail and a fine of up to 300,000 pesos ($6,900).

He said a healthy population of geckos is needed to regulate pests and maintain the fragile ecosystem. Geckos feed on insects and worms. Larger species hunt small birds and rodents.

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Kobe Bryant takes Manila by storm anew

By CELEST R. FLORES and MARK C. GIONGCO
INQUIRER.NET

AP

Los Angeles Lakers player Kobe Bryant embraces a boy during his interaction with his fans Wednesday July 13, 2011 at suburban Taguig city east of Manila, Philippines.

MANILA—Kobe Bryant spun left, turned to his right, pump-faked, then faked again to finally create separation against his defenders before calmly knocking down a soft lay-in.

The Black Mamba struck again, but it wasn't under the bright lights of the Staples Center in Los Angeles–it was at the Araneta Coliseum in Manila Wedneday.

Bryant trooped back to Manila in a trip arranged by Nike Philippines as part of his five-city Asia Take Every Advantage tour.

"I love Manila. This is one of my favorite cities in the world," said Byrant, the five-time NBA champion with the LA Lakers.

"(I have seen other fans from other countries) but not as passionate as this. This is unbelievable," added Bryant, pointing to the crowd, packed to the rafters.

Can one blame Bryant for wanting to go back three times?

Hoops junkies of all sorts went into a thunderous frenzy that had the Araneta Coliseum rocking like when it hosted the Thrilla in Manila just as Bryant nailed his first basket of the night.

The fans, donning a variety of Kobe apparel—from shirts, jerseys to eye-catching Air Zoom Kobe's, came in thinking that it was just going to be an exhibition match between a UAAP selection squad and Smart Gilas Pilipinas, with Bryant overseeing it at courtside.

The national team handily defeated the top college players after 10 minutes, but Byrant decided the show's not over yet. Not until he stepped on the court.

The two-time Finals MVP picked up a Far Eastern U Tamaraws jersey and suited up for the eager UAAP side with La Salle's LA Revilla and Joshua Webb and Ateneo's Greg Slaughter and Kirk Long.

"It was surreal," said Tamaraws' starting guard RR Garcia, who admits to be a big fan of Bryant since he was little, in Filipino. "Too bad I didn't get to play with him since I was in the first group."

Bryant wasted little time and gamely put on a show for his Filipino fans, topped with two dazzling dunks–with the last, a fancy, two-handed slam off a steal from Smart Gilas' Mark Barroca.

The Nationals went on to win, 45-41, despite Bryant's eight-minute stint with the Nike UAAP All-Stars, who trailed by double-digits.

But clearly, it wasn't just about the game as all the players mobbed one of the best players in the world at center court snd relished the rare experience.

Bella Suansing, 16, and Denise David, 15, were among those who went out of their way just to see their basketball icon in the flesh from the stands.

"We've been fans for the last four years. We love him so much," said the smiley Suansing, who was wearing a black Kobe Bryant tee from Nike.

"Kobe's moves are awesome and we love his dedication," added David, who was sporting a Lakers' jersey shirt.

After another warm reception, we can expect that this won't be the last this basketball-crazy country will see of Kobe Bryant.

"The fans are great, the people are great. There's so much love for basketball (here in the Philippines)," Bryant said. "I'll keep coming back here."

Manila assesses whether to seek top terror suspect

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines is assessing whether to seek custody of a top Asian terrorist suspect, who hid for years in its volatile south and allegedly plotted deadly attacks with Filipino militants before he was arrested in Pakistan early this year.

Philippine officials said Thursday that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency officials have offered to send Umar Patek back to Indonesia, his homeland where he is wanted for his alleged role in the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people, or to the Philippines, where he is accused of involvement in a number of deadly bombings.

The 2002 Bali bombings were Southeast Asia's worst terrorist attack.

Pakistan has taken steps to relinquish custody of Patek, whose real name is Anis Alawi Jaffar, and his Filipino wife after capturing them Jan. 25 in the garrison town of Abbottabad, where Osama bin Laden was killed in a highly secretive U.S. commando attack four months later.

Pakistani officials had kept Patek's arrest secret until The Associated Press first broke news of his capture in late March.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said authorities were trying to assess if Patek's presence could strengthen terrorism-related criminal cases lodged against him in Philippine courts before deciding whether to seek his custody.

"There is also an additional security burden if he is brought here," Gazmin told The Associated Press.

A senior Philippine military official said the government would benefit from a "treasure trove of information" that could come from Patek, who fled to the southern Mindanao region a year after the 2002 Bali bombings with Dulmatin, a fellow Indonesian militant gunned down by police in Indonesia last year.

The Philippines could send investigators to interrogate Patek if Manila decided not to seek his custody, said the official, who asked not to be named because he was not authorized to talk to reporters.

The Philippines will receive Patek's wife, identified as Ruqayya Binte Hussain Lucino from southern Sarangani province, once she is repatriated, the official said.

It was not immediately clear if Patek's wife faces criminal cases.

The arrest of Patek, who had a $1 million U.S. bounty on his head, ended a 10-year international manhunt and was a major achievement in the global fight against al-Qaida and its offshoots. If he cooperates, the militant could give valuable intelligence insights on al-Qaida's current state and its hardy Southeast Asian affiliates.

Indonesian officials have said that Patek traveled to Abbottabad to meet bin Laden but that there have been no indications so far that they actually met.

Patek traveled to Pakistan to try to secure al-Qaida funds for his terror plans in the Philippines, where he has struck an alliance with the brutal Abu Sayyaf extremist group, the Filipino official said.

Mayor says US tourists' kidnappers lie low

ZAMBOANGA CITY, Philippines (AFP)—Gunmen holding two US tourists hostage in the Philippines have failed to contact relatives or the authorities, two days after the abduction, a local official said Thursday.

Zamboanga City Mayor Celso Lobregat, who heads a government task force on the hostage crisis, rejected reports that the unidentified gunmen had issued a ransom demand.

"There is no contact, and there is no demand," Lobregat told a news conference.

"The (reported ransom) demand is completely untrue."

Police said gunmen snatched Gerfa Lunsmann, her 14-year-old son, Kevin, and her Filipino teenage nephew on Tuesday at a nearby island resort.

The woman was born in the area but left in her childhood for adoption in the United States, where she later married a US-based German man, local police have said.

The resort is a mere 20 kilometers from the coast of Basilan island, a known stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf, a small Islamic extremist group blamed for previous abductions of foreigners, as well as deadly bombings.

Apart from the militants, the near-lawless region also hosts Muslim separatist guerrillas, as well as simple bandits and pirates.

Kidnapping of locals and foreigners for ransom occurs with alarming frequency in the area.

Lobregat said authorities had not yet taken any firm action to find the latest kidnap victims.

"We have not launched any police operation yet, since we do not have any idea as to where the hostages are held," Lobregat said.

PERSONAL FINANCE

Why our neighbors are richer than us

By RANDELL TIONGSON
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Question: Why are the citizens of our Asian neighbors much richer than us Filipinos?—Name withheld by request

Answer: This is a question that 'hits the spot,' as the saying goes.

I just read an article stating that Singapore has the highest concentration of millionaires in the world with 16 percent of its households having at least $1 million in assets, as determined by a study released by the Boston Consulting Group.

Switzerland comes next on the list with 9.9 percent of its households having $1 million in assets. Hong Kong comes in at fourth with 8.7 percent and the United States is at 7th with 4.5 percent.

Don't even ask where the Philippines ranks as I can't seem to find it in the news feeds… ouch!

I was in Singapore last weekend on a business trip and whenever I am there, I marvel at how progressive a tiny country with hardly any natural resource can be. I enjoy going to Singapore because it gives me an image of how the Philippines can be when we put our acts together.

We don't need to limit our sights to Singapore; we can also look at Thailand, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Indonesia and use them as a benchmark.

The answer to the question of why our neighbors are drastically richer than us partly lies with issues on economics.

I can cite many economic facts like low GDP, infrastructure, population and fiscal policy to explain why we have remained poor. However, economic facts are merely indications of some realities that go beyond economic matters and are more social in nature.

One report we can look at is the national savings rate of said countries. Singapore leads the pack with an average savings rate of 50 percent.

This means that on the average, Singaporeans spend half of their income and save and invest the other half; which is probably a huge reason why there are so many millionaires there.

In personal finance, we espouse a 70-30 rule in terms of spending and saving; if you spend 70 percent of your income and you save and invest the remaining 30 percent, you will most likely have a good future.

Facts will show that the savings rate in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand hovers between 30 and 40 percent, really encouraging statistics.

According to the 70-30 rule on spending and savings, said countries will likely have a good future—well at least in theory. A quick visit to these countries will validate their economic conditions in a visual and experiential manner, even if you don't ogle at boring statistics.

How about the Philippines? This is actually the hard part to write.

Neda reports place the savings rate in the Philippines at between 12 and 16 percent. Following the 70-30 rule on spending and savings, there's not much promise for our nation. It is unfortunate that many Filipinos have embraced a First World consumerism lifestyle but have a Third World income. We simply do not save enough.

Does this mean we are hopeless? Definitely not. All we need to work on is our savings rate and we can best do so with financial education. We must embrace principles of proper budgeting, controlled spending, financial planning and we can start improving our surplus that will guarantee a better future for all of us.

In time and with the proper stimulus, the nation's savings rate will improve as our income improves and our spending becomes wiser. It may be too simplistic but I firmly believe that is the answer to our many problems.

Otherwise, we will keep on asking the question why our neighbors are richer than us.

Randell Tiongson is an advocate of Life & Personal Finance. He is a director of the Registered Financial Planner Institute (Phils.) and has over 20 years' experience in the financial services industry. For more info about the RFP program, visit www.rfp.ph or e-mail info@rfp.ph.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Martin Nievera keeps mum about 'ASAP' no-show

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Fans of Martin Nievera wonder why the singer's 29th anniversary celebration at "ASAP" didn't push through last Sunday. Did the ABS-CBN noontime show give way instead to Sarah Geronimo's comeback?

His fans are worried because of the following tweets that Martin had posted (Martin's Twitter name is "4eversinging4u"):

"Loyalty, faithfulness, being there from the first day. None of these matter. All you need is a loud, demanding manager."

"You wanna know the sad truth? Only if you have a persistent manager can you get the treatment you wish you had."

"It's better to be a diva pala. You really know who your friends are when you are at your lowest. The rest just think of themselves. Fame keeps them away."

I clarified the issue with Mart. As always, he answered in true gentleman fashion.

"Please, please let's not make this about Sarah. Because it really is not. I love Sarah," Mart explains. "I am not hurt because I was pushed aside in 'ASAP' by anyone. In fairness to the show, they had a number for me with a video to greet me for my anniversary. It was I who decided to be absent. To comment further on why I didn't show up last Sunday would be a sign of weakness."

He insists that he's "not one to make demands," nor does "he count his every accolade in order to assure his or her place on a Sunday afternoon party. But I am only human."

Martin Nievera

Be that as it may, Mart reiterates his heart will always be with "ASAP."

"I have been offered over and over again to move to other networks but my loyalty has always been with my Kapamilya," he points out. "But in our world, what does loyalty mean anyway?"

Let's celebrate his 29th anniversary and catch his show, "Martin Nievera: Tribute" at the Newport Performing Arts Theater of Resorts World on July 16 and September 2. After all, his songs make up the soundtrack of our lives.

Martin will be singing standards from Frank Sinatra, Tom Jones, Dean Martin and Michael Jackson, plus timeless OPM hits from composers George Canseco, Willy Cruz and Louie Ocampo.

No show

Why was Boss Vic del Rosario conspicuously absent at the Araneta Coliseum for Vice Ganda's concert which he produced?

Rumor has it that Boss Vic is peeved at the comedian's alleged attitude problem. Heard that Vice demanded a special front row section to be added for his relatives, and that he would curse whoever sits there aside from his family.

Onlookers insist that Vice threw his weight around during technical rehearsals which almost led to the walkout of the director. Perhaps it was just brought about by the preconcert tension.

"I just had an important appointment that day," Boss Vic clarifies. "Viva might do a repeat."

Anne Curtis braves the MRT for Kylie Minogue

By the ENTERTAINMENT STAFF
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

With just 14 minutes before the start of Kylie Minogue's "Aphrodite" concert at the Big Dome Tuesday night, Anne Curtis did something few celebs would dare—take the MRT. Anne was in a mad rush because she had just arrived from Melbourne and traffic in Edsa was…the usual.

On her Twitter account, the "Showtime!" host posted a photo of herself in MRT's designated coach for women. She tweeted, too: "They're [passengers] all nice! Swerte daw ako at hindi masyado siksikan," she tweeted. "I can see the traffic on Edsa from here! I made the right decision!"

Needless to say, the tweet caused a ruckus among the madlang people. In minutes, the words "MRT" and "Anne Curtis" had made it to the social networking site's top 10 trending topics. Anne has 1,372,704 followers—the first Filipino Twitter user to hit the seven-digit follower mark.

Anne Curtis

Tuna diva

Angel Locsin reportedly came to the Century Tuna ad launch at the Intercon one and a half hour late and had a lift held for her. Meaning, hotel guests were made to take other elevators? Angel's rumored beau Phil Younghusband came on time daw and had to wait in the holding area for his partner.

Staying put

Is Judy Ann Santos leaving ABS-CBN for more hefty offers from rival networks? In an interview with "TV Patrol" on July 5, the Kapamilya actress stressed that she's not going anywhere soon. "Meron pa akong existing contract with ABS-CBN and alam ko nagrenew ako last year," she said.

Who's that girl?

"Pilipinas Got Talent" Season 1 champ Jovit Baldivino was spotted bringing a girl to his condominium unit recently. Some people suspect it was Jovit's new squeeze. The diminutive singer told "Showbiz News Ngayon" on July 5 that the girl in question was just his personal assistant. "Sa 'kin po, pass muna [on relationships] Trabaho muna, bata pa po ako," he said. (A girlfriend? Why not? A personal assistant? Wow.)

Making time

Despite their busy schedules, Zanjoe Marudo and Bea Alonzo make it a point to spend quality time together. What's their favorite bonding activity? "Golf," Zanjoe told "SNN." Asked about their love life's status, he said: "Sobrang maligaya ako kung ano man 'yung mga nagagawa naming mga bagay. Sana mas mag-grow pa kung saan man pupunta. Hindi ko naman minamadali." (Kilig factor!)

Rivals? Partners!

In the last Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF), comedy royalties Vic Sotto and Ai Ai de las Alas battled for box-office supremacy. This year, they're teaming up in the MMFF entry "Enteng ng Ina Mo." Ai Ai told "SNN": "Napapapagod na nga akong siya lagi ang kalaban sa MMFF. Ngayon kampi na kami!"

In their words

For those who missed last weekend's TV gabfests (And why we are moved, if we are moved):

■ Manny Pacquiao, asked if he plans to ask wife Jinkee to be a cohost in his game show "Manny, Many Prizes": "Baka mapabayaan ang business namin. Kapag nalugi 'yun milyun-milyong pera mawawala sa 'min … What for na mag-show biz siya?"

■ Sarah Geronimo on her newfound friendship with Cristine Reyes: "I'm very, very happy. Noon ko pa naman gustong makilala nang mas malalim pa si Cristine, eh. It would be an honor na maging kaibigan niya … Masaya ako kung ano man 'yung friendship na meron kami ni Cristine ngayon." (Para itong pang-love team na dialogue ah.)

■ FHM (Philippines) magazine's Sexiest Woman this year, Sam Pinto, asked if she's currently entertaining suitors: "Marami!" (Jealous kami!)

■ Rufa Mae Quinto, asked if she's dating anyone at the moment: "I'm inspired and single, ready to mingle! Magaganap ang dapat maganap sa tamang panahon." (Ready, get set …)

■ Melai Cantiveros, asked if she feels that boyfriend Jason is "the one": "Kalma lang! Gusto ko siya kasi nagmamahalan kami. Pero pagdating ng panahon malalaman din natin 'yan!" (Not very reassuring, huh?)

■ Jason on how his first kiss with Melai Cantiveros felt: "Unbelievable!"

■ Love-struck Phil Younghusband on rumored girlfriend Angel Locsin: "I can't sleep without texting her good night. I need to say good night to her." (Take note, "need.")

■ Bianca King on rumors that she doesn't accept supporting roles anymore: "Hindi po ako naging choosy talaga. Kung ano po 'yung dumating na mga projects sa 'kin this year and last year, 'yun po 'yung tinanggap ko lang … Bilang tunay na artist, hindi ka dapat mag-judge sa billing or exposure. It's kung ano 'yung maibibigay mong performance bilang artist, and that's what makes the role." (Speechless kami.)

■ Cherie Gil on joining the dance show "Time of My Life": "It's always been my dream to be able to dance, even just a little. Frustration ko 'yun, ang maging dancer!" (Go, girl!)

■ Pia Guanio on her first trip to Europe with non-show biz fiancé Steve Mago: "For people to do their work well, you have to recharge din. I decided to go to Rome and we're going to Paris … No shopping! Talagang it's going to be a historical and cultural trip." (Siya lang mag-isa sa Rome?)

■ Jennica Garcia on pregnancy rumors: "Hindi talaga … Ang chaka! Ano ba 'yan, may masabi na lang [sila]. Medyo nakakatawa, actually!" (Actually.)

■ Angeline Quinto, stepping foot on American soil: "'Yung hangin dito parang aircon namin sa bahay … Ito pala 'yung America … amoy America talaga!" (Surprise!)

■ Jericho Rosales on being labeled a playboy: "Madali akong mag-fall in love. But ang level ng kagandahan sa 'kin, wala lang [sa mukha]. Nagkataon lang na lahat ng naka-date ko, maganda rin sa loob … Hindi po ako babaero! " (Gee, we could have sworn.)

■ Korina Sanchez, asked if she plans on having a baby soon: "In the making! I've been such a good girl! I'm sure 'yan ang Kanyang regalo sa lahat ng sakripisyo sa buhay ko—na bibigyan Niya ako ng isang anak." (Uh, isa lang?)

Direk Soxie: 'Melason' always fighting on the set

By MARINEL R. CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

"Parang aso't pusa" is how director Soxie Topacio describes Melai Cantiveros and Jason Francisco while on the set of the comedy flick "The Adventures of Pureza: Queen of Riles."

Popularly known as the love team "Melason" (having met as contestants in the reality show "Pinoy Big Brother"), Melai and Jason reportedly fought at the slightest provocation during the shoot. "One minute they're so sweet, and then they refuse to talk to each other," recalls Soxie. "I sometimes scream at them, 'magbati na kayo!' But they're very professional. They deliver."

Working on the movie, coproduced by Star Cinema and SineScreen, was generally a breeze, says Soxie. "We shot the film for almost 20 days. I enjoyed every day of it. It was my first time to work with people from Star Cinema. I heard rumors of how difficult it is to collaborate with them, but I experienced none of it."

The most he was asked to do, Soxie relates, was "to tweak the script a little, but I didn't mind at all. It was for one character, who is supposed to marry someone of the same sex. I understood that they were merely being careful not to offend the gay community."

Soxie adds that the script by Gina Marissa Tagasa was hilarious.

"Pureza," now showing in theaters, also features Gina Pareño, Joem Bascon, Bianca Manalo, Martin del Rosario, Nico Antonio and Bekimon.

Degrading comments

Meanwhile, Soxie gets furious as he reacts to statements made by young filmmaker Rafael "Rafa" Santos on working with theater actors.

"I've been in theater for 42 years. Many of us consider it holy ground. To make those degrading comments was the worst thing he did," says Soxie.

Rafa unwittingly courted controversy recently on ABS-CBN's ANC show "Cityscape," when program host Lexi Schulze asked why the director preferred to employ stage actors in his short film "Samarito." Rafa's casual reply: "Because they don't complain. You can feed them Skyflakes three meals a day or pay them in cat food. They're never late and they cry when you want them to cry."

There is a move, says Soxie, to boycott Santos' movie, an entry in the Short Film category of the 7th Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival. The movie's lead actress, Bea Garcia, also said in an interview that she would never work with Santos again.

In an effort to make amends, Rafa—a son of lawyer and women's rights advocate Katrina Legarda—issued an open letter addressed "To the Theater Community, To the Artists, Patrons, Advocates and Enthusiasts that form the Theater Community":

"It is with a clear mind and heavy heart that I extend my heartfelt apology. If I have offended any of you, I am sorry. If I've offended anyone you love, I take the blame. If any of you feel sorry for me, please don't. I built my own coffin of words and nailed it shut with insolence."

Soxie, who first acted in the stage production "Willow" in 1968, points out: "There's a comment on Facebook that said, 'I'm a friend of his mom's, but I think this boy needs a good spanking.' This is so true. Who is he to make insensitive comments like that? To think that his grandfather, Tony Carreon, was also very much part of theater."

Maharlika – Opinyon

‘Hanggang sorry na lang ba ’yan?’

There’s The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

One of text messages I got reads: “In 2005, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said, ‘I am sorry,’ for having cheated at the elections. In 2011, the bishops say, ‘We are sorry,’ for helping her get away with it. *Hanggang sorry na lang ba ’yan?”*

I don’t know that that doesn’t offer a good perspective with which to view things.

Of course it’s a positive turn that the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines has even thought to apologize for some of its bishops accepting donations from the PCSO, if not indeed actively soliciting them. Before Nereo Bishop Odchimar came out with the CBCP statement last Monday, Archbishop Fernando Capalla and the culprits had been demanding to know what was so wrong with the idea of them getting those things when the ultimate beneficiaries of those things were the poor. The fact that the CBCP now says, “We are saddened that many of you, especially the youth, the poor, our Basic Ecclesial Communities, have been confused because of the apparent inconsistency of our actions with our pastoral preaching,” must suggest they find something remiss.

What the right hand giveth however, the left hand taketh away. In her apology years ago, Arroyo promptly went on to justify her calling up a Comelec official repeatedly in the midst of the counting of votes as a completely innocent act, a lapse of judgment. In their own apology today, the CBCP goes on to say: “We assure you that their action was done without malice. Out of their sincere desire to help their people, they failed to consider the pitfalls to which these grants could possibly lead them.”

There and then, in the very thing that is meant to correct an inconsistency between action and pastoral preaching, you find another inconsistency between action and pastoral preaching. The pastoral preaching is that you are not really sorry if you cannot admit the depth and gravity of your sin. This action is saying you are sorry without admitting the depth and gravity of your sin. Indeed, while ignoring or dismissing the depth and gravity of your sin.

By itself, the amounts the bishops got from the PCSO are nothing. They are paltry sums compared to what the congressmen, the generals, the justices, the businessmen, the fake NGOs, and the even faker guns for hire in the media got during Arroyo’s time. Particularly in the aftermath of the “Hello, Garci” scandal, which could have, and should have, ended her illegitimate rule. As beneficiaries of bribery go, the bishops weren’t as bad as the others.

As the effect of their actions went, however, it is another matter entirely. The bishops were the single biggest reason for Arroyo managing to survive and profit from her crime. More than the congressmen, more than the generals, more than the justices, more than the businessmen, more than the fake NGOs, more than the faker guns for hire in the media. The bishops lent their collective moral backing to an immoral act, to an immoral rule, to an immoral person. So disgusted was Cory by the betrayal (she was assured by the highest officials of the Church they would be behind her in calling for Arroyo to resign) that for the first time in her life the most faithful Catholic in this country thought of becoming unfaithful.

The fact that the bishops got the most niggardly sums from providing the weightiest service to the cause of political debauchery does not make them any less corrupt, it just makes them cheap. Cheapness does not make their sin less deep and grievous, it makes it more so.

How possibly characterize as without malice Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos’ obsequious letter pledging constant support for Arroyo for a prospective birthday gift of a 4×4 and his call for P-Noy to resign or be forcibly removed on the ground that he has done nothing for the country? That comes from a sincere desire to help the people?

In the end, for all its tones of humility and contriteness, the CBCP statement doesn’t really put anything to rest, it only raises more questions about the Church’s capacity to lead, to guide, to shepherd.

Chief of those questions is when the one institution that has always proclaimed itself the repository of truth, the guardian of truth, and the harbinger of truth will finally be able to look with unflinching eyes at the truth about itself. It’s enough to make you believe that God loves to play tricks on Filipinos that on the 150th anniversary of the birth of Jose Rizal, he has caused to arise all sorts of reminders about how we haven’t really moved that far away from his time.

The corruption Rizal himself condemned among the friars went beyond their scraggly greed, or ungodly need for creature comforts, it extended to the perversion or putrefaction of their moral core. Rizal never passed up a chance to show how the one group of people expressly dedicated to virtue was given only to vice, how the one tribe of people sworn to preach God’s truth could hide that truth from itself. The one sin Rizal harped on among the friars was not lechery, it was hypocrisy. He thought that a deep and grievous sin.

Just as well, yet another question it raises is: How can you punish the members of the clergy who transgress in the eyes of man as much as in the eyes of God? Congressmen, generals, justices, businessmen, civil society workers, and journalists you can jail. Or so theoretically. Priests and bishops you cannot, by a tacit proscription more binding than the legal one: The culture forbids it. The erring bishops say that if P-Noy and Margie Juico want it, they can have their SUVs back. That’s all very fine, except for one thing: Can they give us back as well our last six years? Good question the one I’ve been getting in text messages:

Hanggang sorry na lang ba ’yan?

‘Pera’

Looking Back

By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Pieces of eight are Spanish silver coins often associated with pirates in film, legend and literature. Worth “eight royals” (ocho reales), these beautiful coins were recognized by the Pillars of Hercules and two globes showing the Spanish Empire before it crumbled in the late 19th century, thus in the Philippines these coins are known as “dos mundos” (two worlds). “Utraque unum” (both are one) is the Latin text stamped on these coins whose reverse carries the coat of arms of the Kingdoms of Castilla and Leon and the name of the Spanish king in whose name and authority they were issued.

First minted in the 15th century to match German silver coins, they became, by the 18th century, the first truly global currency, recognized and accepted anywhere in the world. Also known as the “Spanish dollar” on which the US dollar was based, these coins were legal tender in the United States until 1857. It is said that the present name for the Malaysian currency—the ringgit—resulted from the term used for the serrated edge of these Spanish coins. Furthermore the Malay word for silver “perak” is probably why Filipinos call their money “pera.”

I won’t bore you with obscure numismatic history today, but you can see from the opening paragraphs how much history can be read from or associated with one coin. This is why I visit the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Money Museum on Roxas Boulevard every year; on every visit I learn something new or find new insight in something old. Don’t be intimidated by the fortress-like BSP complex. Just turn up at the gate, leave your ID, and the unusually courteous guards will direct you to this small museum that remains one of Manila’s hidden treasures. It’s one of the rare things in life that come for free.

More dazzling than the silver coins, of course, are gold coins or “onzas” that carry the profiles of Spanish Kings Carlos III and Ferdinand VII. These were minted in Spanish colonies in South America and traveled all the way to the Philippines. Both the silver dos mundos and the gold onzas remind us of a time when the Catholic kings boasted of an overseas empire where the sun, literally, did not set.

A royal decree in 1861 established the Casa de Moneda in Manila that melted down South American gold onzas circulating in the Philippines and converted these into our first gold coins. There were three coins of .875 gold in varying sizes depending on the denomination: the smallest at P1 weighed 1.6915 grams, P2 at 3.3830 grams, and the biggest at P4 weighing 6.7661 grams. All coins carried the profile of the pudgy Spanish Queen Isabel II on one side and the Spanish coat of arms on the reverse. These gold coins are referred to as “Isabelinas.” What makes these coins special is the fact that the name “Filipinas” is proudly engraved on the reverse of the coins below the Spanish coat of arms. It was the first time the name of the archipelago, the name of our country, appeared in coinage.

A wonderful bronze statue of Isabel II stands outside the walls of Intramuros, in front of the gate known as Puerta Isabel II. “Puerta” (gate/door) is a vulgar word for female anatomy in Pinoy porn that reminds me of an anecdote from the late Alejandro Roces who said that “pera” originated from the coins that carried the profile of Isabel II whose legitimacy was challenged by her uncle Carlos, resulting in the so-called “Carlist Wars.” Roces maintained that Isabel’s detractors referred to her as “La Perra” (The Bitch), hence the coins that bore her image became known as “perra,” a name that caught on to become our “pera.”

Banco Español Filipino de Isabel II was established in 1851 and issued the first paper money that were known as “pesos fuertes” (strong pesos) and carried the name and image of the Queen, until she was deposed in 1869 and the bank became Banco Español Filipino. Spain must have been in such turmoil that the bank did not replace the name of Isabel II with that of her successor Alfonso XII. I guess it would be too complicated for the bank to keep changing its name to match that of the reigning monarch.

When the bank changed its name in 1912 into Banco de las Islas Filipinas (Bank of the Philippine Islands), it evolved into today’s “BPI”, the oldest bank in Southeast Asia. Poor Alfonso XII, his image on the gold coins known as “Alfonsinos” was not acceptable to the public which preferred “Isabelinas.” Thus the Casa Moneda kept issuing these with an ante-dated year, 1868. This explains why Isabelinas are easier to find than Alfonsinos.

A decade ago, Isabelinas could be had at a reasonable price because the value of gold was rock bottom. A P4 Isabelina could be had then for as low as P2,800. If you could find one today, it sells for P15,000 to P20,000, depending on its physical condition or the rarity of its date.

From the 19th century it took a while before gold coins were minted for the Philippines again. In 1970 a commemorative gold coin was struck to mark the Manila visit of Pope Paul VI.

How come we don’t have more gold coins when, once upon a time, the Philippines was one of the top 10 producers of gold worldwide? Our ancestors a thousand years ago wore fabulous gold jewelry and gold coins circulated in the Philippines in the 19th century. If we once had a Golden Age, why are we so poor today?

Comments are welcome in my Facebook Fan Page.

EDITORIAL

Let them pay

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By themselves, the numbers are both staggering and mind-boggling. According to Rosario Uriarte, former Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office general manager, the PCSO spent P325 million in a hush-hush intelligence fund from 2008 to 2010. The PCSO, long considered the most generous of the Philippine government’s charitable extensions, finds itself in the center of an expanding probe centering on ridiculous amounts of money spent on unknown, or possibly non-existent, projects.

As she was being grilled by the Senate blue ribbon committee, Uriarte admitted that she personally brought several memoranda to then President Gloria Arroyo, requesting for more money for PCSO’s intelligence operations; and that Ms Arroyo initialed her approval on the memos.

Blue ribbon committee chair Sen. Teofisto Guingona III opined that Ms Arroyo could be charged with the crime of plunder: “It implicates the former president in this whole mystery. It makes her a co-conspirator…. When you steal more than P50 million, it’s plunder.” Malacañang immediately signified that it would not hesitate to prosecute the former president if the Senate probe unearths enough strong evidence against her.

Observers can hardly be faulted for starting to become used to the slinging of such astonishing amounts of money by a government agency that has become synonymous with giving. But the numbers will not go away easily.

Uriarte admitted that P138 million, the single biggest spot of spending, was used during the election year of 2010—specifically between January and June. An incredulous Sen. Panfilo Lacson, former director general of the Philippine National Police, noted that the expenditure was bigger than the money set aside by the entire Armed Forces of the Philippines for its own intelligence fund this year, P124.3 million.

What could the PCSO be gathering intelligence for with such a huge amount of money? In the series of memoranda-requests to President Arroyo for additional intelligence funds, the reason given was the same: to combat fraudulent practices such as selling donated medicines, unofficial use of the ubiquitous PCSO ambulances and the nefarious activities of fixers, among others.

Her office only had P60 million for intelligence operations for 2010, but Uriarte admitted that she wrote President Arroyo asking first for additional P150 million, and then another P10 million. A perturbed Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile blurted out: “If you already have P60 million, why did you still ask for big sums of money? What event were you preparing for? An insurgency? A rebellion within the PCSO?”

The question remains: where is the money? Was it spent on “ghost” projects, or did it line some official’s deep pockets? Perhaps the worst thing about this quagmire of rising numbers is the fact that the funds could easily have been spent on much more important things. How many hungry Filipinos can P150 million feed? How many school buildings could it have built? How many lives could it have saved?

Now that the right people are looking into what could be the worst re-channeling of state funds in recent history, they need to make sure that the money is traced, that they identify those to whom the money was diverted—and that they pay.

Maharlika – Samut' Sari

'ADIOS' MARK RABAGO

Rep. Diego T. Benavente (Rep-Saipan), second right, shakes hands with House Speaker Eli D. Cabrera (Rep-Saipan) while Sen. Pete Reyes (Rep-Saipan) and former speaker Oscar Babauta, right, look on. Thursday was Benavente's last day at the Legislature after announcing his retirement on June 30.

INTERIOR FUNDING MARK RABAGO

Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta and acting governor Eloy S. Inos sign two documents giving the CNMI a total of $2.26 million in grants intended to develop geothermal energy and bring the Commonwealth's fading economy back to life.

CONFERENCE CALL MONETH G. DEPOSA

Board of Education chair Marylou Ada, left, and Education Commissioner Rita Sablan speak to education officials after Wednesday's historic conference call with U.S. Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan at the board's conference room on Capital Hill.

HONORING PAROLE AND PROVATION

Chief Justice Miguel Demapan and House Speaker Eliceo Cabrera gather for a group photo with court staff, Probation and Parole officials and personnel, and other community leaders during Thursday's proclamation signing for the 11th Annual Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Team Gagu wins the softball championship during the Santa Remedio Church fundraiser that took place on July 8-10, 2011. Also in photo is Fr. Art Stoia and the winners' price. Congratulations to Team Gagu for winning the championship.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Members of the first runner up team Ur Balls pose with Fr. Art Stoia. Santa Remedio Church would like to thank Natibu Sport Association for sponsoring the 2011 Tanapag Youth Organization Softball fundraiser for their trip to Madrid, Spain. Thank you to all the teams that participated, sponsors, fans and volunteers.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Advanced happy birthday to Ruel Villacrusis, who will be celebrating his special day on July 17. Greetings coming out from the RRV Group of Companies, staff, and employees.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

YoungStyle

Stars mull options if 'Potter' hadn't come calling

By DAVID GERMAIN
AP MOVIE WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—In some fantasy world, Daniel Radcliffe might be a low-level go-fer on movie sets. Emma Watson might be a nobody auditioning for stage plays. Tom Felton might be noodling around as a musician. And Rupert Grint might be selling ice cream on the street.

With the finale "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2" arriving this week, the young stars of one of Hollywood's biggest film franchises pondered what they might be doing if the acting thing hadn't worked out.

DANIEL RADCLIFFE:

An 11-year-old when picked for the title role of the "Harry Potter" franchise, Radcliffe figures that since his parents worked in the arts—his mother as a casting director, his father as a literary agent—he would have ended up in show business. But not as an actor, probably as an assistant director.

"What probably would have happened, when I got to about 17, 18, and it became apparent, as it would have done, to my parents that I wasn't going to be going to university, I'm sure they probably would have tried to get me, like, an internship on a film as a runner. And then I'd just try to work my way up the A.D. ladder from there," said Radcliffe, whose pre-"Harry Potter" acting work included the title role in a British television production of "David Copperfield."

"To this day, I still fancy myself as a bit of an A.D. Anyone who works with me will tell you if they give me a radio, I constantly kind of try to run messages between people, that I always like to know exactly what's going on around the set. So if somebody's saying, 'Where's so and so? We need them now,' I can go, 'They're there. That person's coming back. They've just gone to the toilet.' I really like to know exactly what's going on at all times on set, because I like to feel that's another way in which I can make myself useful."

EMMA WATSON:

Just 10 when she was cast as bookish Hermione Granger, Watson had no previous professional acting experience. Yet she's convinced that no matter how she would have gone on to make a living, acting still would have been part of her life.

"I would have found some way to end up acting, performing. I mean, obviously, not on this scale, but I would have been doing it, I'm sure," Watson said. "I would have been doing plays. I'm almost a hundred percent sure I would be doing plays, I would be acting. I mean, that would be a sideline thing for me. I would be focusing toward some kind of career that I'm not really sure of now, but I definitely would have been performing, some way or another."

AP

In this July 11, 2011 file photo, cast members, from left, Tom Felton, Emma Watson, Daniel Radcliffe and Rupert Grint pose together at the premiere of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2" at Avery Fisher Hall in New York.

RUPERT GRINT:

Also a screen newcomer when chosen at 11 to play jittery but stalwart sidekick Ron Weasley, Grint finds it daunting to imagine a life in which he never landed among the "Harry Potter" clan.

"I don't know. It's quite a scary thought. I saw recently, they put on one of the DVDs, footage from our screen tests when we were first kind of auditioning. In one of them, there was a test with Emma and Dan with a different Ron, another kid who was auditioning at the same time. That was very weird to see that, because he was good. I probably would have picked him.

"It was weird to think what I'd be doing now. ... I'd have probably gone down the art route. I wanted to design hats for a while when I was really young. And being an ice cream man was another dream, but I've kind of let go of that now. I bought an ice cream van and brought it up, actually, on the last day and served ice cream to the crew. I don't really drive it too much now, because you get people queuing up on the street."

TOM FELTON:

Like Radcliffe and Watson, the guy who co-starred as bullying Draco Malfoy expects he would have wound up doing some sort of creative work. Also like Radcliffe, Felton had previous acting experience before "Harry Potter," appearing in the fantasy film "The Borrowers" and Jodie Foster's "Anna and the King."

"My brother and I often talk about it. Where would I be and what would I be doing? I like to think something creative. I've always been fairly minded that way, certainly with music and fooling around as a kid with a video camera," said Felton, who was 12 when cast in "Harry Potter." ''I'd like to think it would be something in that realm.

"It certainly was not going to be sitting behind an office. If I did, I wouldn't be happy doing it. So I've been very lucky that I've been able to follow a passion of mine from a very young age. A lot of people aren't so fortunate. A lot of friends now are working jobs they can't stand just so they can get enough money to go traveling or to start their own business or to do whatever they want. I've just been blessed to start in the industry that I want to continue with."

5 favorite 'Harry Potter' grown-ups

By CHRISTY LEMIRE
AP MOVIE CRITIC

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The world of "Harry Potter" has always centered on the boy wizard and his pals as they navigate danger, outsmart villains and hurtle toward their inevitable destiny. But the eight-film series has also featured a who's-who of outstanding British actors playing the adults in this magical world.

Since it all ends this week with the release of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2," here's a look at five favorite grown-ups from the franchise:

■ Alan Rickman as Severus Snape

Probably the most fascinating figure in the Potter world because of his shifting alliances and an emotional depth that's unexpected given his icy demeanor. Rickman is captivating in the role, with his droll, deadpan delivery that oozes condescending menace. A half-blood wizard, Snape has been a minion of the evil Lord Voldemort

as well as an ally of Hogwarts headmaster Albus Dumbledore. He's served as the intimidating Defense Against the Dark Arts professor and eventually headmaster himself but he's also been a protector of Harry. Snape bullies his students but he also reveals his bravery, and in this final film, a flashback that explains his history with the young wizard provides one of its most poignant scenes.

■ Ralph Fiennes as Voldemort

Fiennes is just chilling as the dark lord, the lifelong nemesis Harry is destined to fight, and that's only partly because of his freakish, noseless appearance. His soft, hissing delivery is more disarming in a way than if he'd issued his threats and orders with a bellowing boom. The artist formerly known as Tom Riddle was once the

most brilliant student Hogwarts had ever seen. But he used those strengths to transform himself into the most powerful dark wizard ever, and boy, does he have it in for Harry Potter. He seriously needs to find a hobby.

■ Michael Gambon as Dumbledore

Gambon took over the role after the death of Richard Harris, who played the headmaster at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the first two films in the franchise, "Sorcerer's Stone" and "Chamber of Secrets." And he took a different approach to the part: While he remained a bastion of all that is good and true in the world, a steady and authoritative voice of reason, Gambon played him with a bit more fire and range than Harris. Perhaps that's also because more of the character is revealed to us over time. With his long, silver hair and beard, Dumbledore is revered, but he's also got some secrets.

■ Helena Bonham Carter as Bellatrix Lestrange

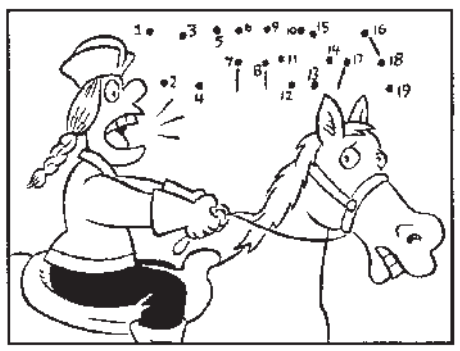
A great opportunity for this versatile actress to show off her wild side. With her dark, untamed locks and severe, black wardrobe, Bellatrix is fiercely loyal to Voldemort as a member of his army of Death Eaters. Bonham Carter plays the role with wicked glee, reveling in the over-the-top nature of being an evil flunky, even though the character herself comes from an elite wizarding family. In one hilarious sequence in "Deathly Hallows: Part 2," Bonham Carter plays Emma Watson playing Harry's pal Hermione pretending to be ... Bellatrix Lestrange, allowing her to show off another side of her physical talents.

■ Imelda Staunton as Dolores Umbridge

Do you notice a theme here? With the exception of Dumbledore, most of my choices are evil—or at least partly evil—characters. Everyone hates Dolores Umbridge. But Staunton is so deliciously cruel in the role, she's strangely irresistible and impossible to forget, even though she only appears in two of the eight movies: "Order of the Phoenix" and "Deathly Hallows: Part 1." The Ministry of Magic assigns Dolores to the Hogwarts staff to keep an eye on Dumbledore and impart her bland, useless, "Ministry-approved" curriculum. Passive-aggressive oppression is her game; she's toad-like but perfectly coifed in her prim, pink dresses, and she hands out torturous assignments with a smile. It's pure magic.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



CONNECT THE DOTS and find out what Paul Revere said when he finished his famous ride.

Answer: "Whoa!"

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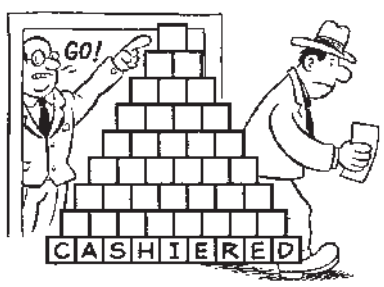


THE PYRAMID OF WORD POWER!

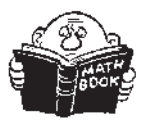
You have three minutes to unlock the secrets of Word Power! Starting with the given word CASHIERED, at the bottom of our pyramid, try dropping one letter at a time as you work your way up, so that the remaining letters, at each level, spell out a new word. The following helpful hints are in ascending order, beginning with "cashiered."

1. To be dismissed from your job.
2. To have looked for.
3. Having arrived at.
4. What the mad cat's back did.
5. Famous tree of Lebanon.
6. (Informal) A funny person.
7. An ungentlemanly man.
8. A notice of sale.
9. Roman symbol for 500.

Answers: 1. Cashiered. 2. Searched. 3. Reached. 4. Arched. 5. Cedar. 6. Card. 7. Cad. 8. Ad. 9. D.

ODDS AND ENDS!
Can you come up with five odd figures that add up to 16?

? ? ? ? ? = 16



Answer: (1 + 1 + 13 = 16) or (1 + 1 + 3 + 11 = 16).

Illustrated by David Coulson

IT'S MAGIC! Use the following 10 numbers to fill in our Magic Square (8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21 and 24.) The numbers, in each horizontal row and vertical column, should total 63. We've filled in six of the squares. The rest is up to you.

	18	22	
	9	14	
17			23

[63]

Our answer: First row: 15, 18, 22, 8. Second row: 21, 9, 14, 19. Third row: 10, 24, 16, 13. Fourth row: 17, 12, 11, 23.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was Danish author, philosopher and theologian Soren Kierkegaard who made the following sage observation: "People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use."

■ After the release of Alfred Hitchcock's iconic film "The Birds," pet stores all over the country saw a sharp decline in the sales of pet birds.

■ You might be surprised to learn that during the first airing of the original "Star Trek" series, no episode ranked higher than No. 52 in the ratings.

■ According to the Guinness Book of Records, it was poor Donna Griffiths who suffered the longest sneezing fit ever recorded. On Jan. 13, 1981, the 12-year-old girl started sneezing, and she continued sneezing every day for more than two and a half years.

■ If you're like the average American, you eat 20 quarts of ice cream every year.

■ I'm sure you've heard the term "dimwit" used as an insult, but, as it turns out, the word is more descriptive than derogatory. The human brain actually uses less power than a 100-watt light bulb.

■ A man named Patrick Hooligan lived in London in the mid-1800s. He was such a notorious troublemaker that his name is still used today to refer to ruffians and hoodlums.

■ In 1909, in England, one Lord Barbazon took a pig up for a ride in an airplane. Bovines seemingly got short shrift; the first cow didn't take to the air until 1930. It was in February of that year that a cow was loaded into an airplane in St. Louis. It was milked during the flight, and the milk was parachuted to earth.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "He's turned his life around. He used to be depressed and miserable. Now he's miserable and depressed."—David Frost

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MAGIC MAZE — SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

E	U	Q	N	K	H	L	E	B	Y	V	S	P	M	J
H	E	B	Y	V	N	T	E	Q	O	L	I	G	D	B
Y	W	T	R	P	M	I	K	U	I	F	D	B	Y	W
U	S	Q	O	M	K	K	L	I	M	F	D	B	Z	X
W	U	S	Q	O	N	S	C	K	L	A	H	J	H	F
D	J	E	F	F	E	R	S	O	N	C	S	A	D	Y
W	V	T	N	S	Q	I	P	O	C	A	U	N	A	L
K	I	N	T	O	R	H	T	H	R	N	R	C	E	F
E	E	C	B	R	T	L	A	Z	Y	W	A	F	R	V
P	U	S	O	R	A	S	E	L	P	P	I	H	W	Q
P	N	M	M	W	E	H	T	Y	W	L	J	I	H	F

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Chase	Jefferson	Read	Walton
Franklin	Morris	Ross	Whipple
Hancock	Paca	Rush	Wythe
Hart	Penn	Stone	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	−		×		8
÷		×		×	
	×		+		15
×		+		−	
	×		−		15
20		27		23	

1 3 4 4 5 6 7 8 9

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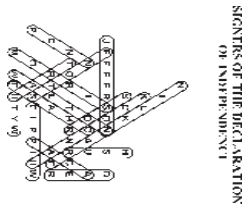
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

8	4	×	3	−	5
	×		×		÷
15	8	+	7	×	1
	−		+		×
15	9	−	6	×	4
	23		27		20

Dogs help bring neighbors together

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I just wanted to send you a note about something that occurred to me this morning. I was out for my morning run, and on almost every block I found myself waving and smiling to neighbors who were out walking their dogs.

I take my own dog, "Riley," out very early each morning, but at 11 years of age he's gotten too old to go running with me. Still, it struck me today how many of my neighbors I've gotten to know just because we're all fellow dog owners. Even if we don't have long conversations, we all have commiserated over the chore of dragging ourselves out of bed early to walk our dogs, or chatted about how nice (or horrible) the weather is. I realized today that I'm acquainted with at least one person on every street that's part of my running route.

It's just a nice thought I had about how dogs bring people together. Hope you agree!—Riley's Mom in Albuquerque

DEAR RILEY'S MOM: That is a fantastic thought! I sometimes wonder about the friendships I might not have made if it weren't for my pets.

I also think that seeing the same owners and their dogs every day is great for the dog, as well. We stop to catch up on gossip and weather, and our dogs get a chance to catch up on ... well, whatever they learn from sniffing each other. At any rate, it's a chance for both dogs and owners to socialize and stay friendly with the neighbors.

■ ■ ■

Send your question or comment to ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. For more pet care-related advice and information, visit www.pawscorner.com.

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Summer seashell souvenirs

Beautiful seashells are priceless, especially those that your kids handpick on a lazy day at a favorite shore this summer. Or maybe your family hit warm climates this past winter and you have some choice "keepers" from a special beach. As your collection grows, sort them, clean them and then make one of these simple seashell souvenirs suitable for saving!

Wind Chimes

Select a small seashell and glue it on the end of a 23-inch length of fishing line or twine. (If your shell has a large enough hole, thread the line through the hole and tie a knot instead.) Make several. When the glue is dry, arrange each line vertically in front of you with the shells on the bottom. Set an 8- to 10-inch piece of driftwood, a small branch or a dowel across the top. Tie the loose ends of the lines around the driftwood and knot, making sure that when the shells dangle, they will touch each other when a gentle breeze blows.

Or, intersperse several more shells on the length of fishing line or twine. Knot each one evenly in place and end with the final shell dangling.

Chic Decorator Shells

Display larger and self-standing shells on your windowsill, around your bathtub or in your garden. Conch shells make lovely miniplanters for potting plants, while clam and abalone shells can make interesting soap dishes.

Shell Jewelry

String a variety of shells with small holes in them on a chain or string to wear around your neck.

Shell Prints

On a newspaper-covered table, apply acrylic paints with a sponge brush to the outside of a flat shell, such as a scallop shell. Gently lay a plain cotton T-shirt, napkin or canvas tote bag over it. Press lightly with your fingers so that the paint is transferred onto the cloth. Remove from the shell to reveal the beautiful natural pattern. Add more paint to the shell for more prints. Or, paint additional shells in various sizes using contrasting colors to make a pleasing design. Beginners might wish to make prints on paper napkins, perfect for a seaside picnic.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning series "Donna's Day" is airing on public television nationwide. To find more of her creative family recipes and activities, visit www.donnasday.com and link to the NEW Donna's Day Facebook fan page. Her latest book is "Donna Erickson's Fabulous Funstuff for Families."

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Life & Style

Beyonce's father denies stealing from her

NEWYORK (AP)—Mathew Knowles insists he still has an amicable relationship with his daughter Beyonce—even though she dumped him as her manager two months ago—but is alleging that people close to her have tried to destroy his reputation with allegations that he stole from her.

Knowles filed papers in a Texas court this week alleging that members of Beyonce's camp, which he says includes her label, Columbia Records, Live Nation and her superstar husband Jay-Z's Roc Nation, have made "negative comments about me."

"We absolutely have not taken any money from Beyonce, and all dollars will be accounted for," he told The Associated Press in an interview Thursday afternoon. "In no way have we stole money. Again, this about the people who have made these claims—they have to come into the light."

Knowles guided his daughter's career since she was child, first to superstardom as part of the group Destiny's Child, and then as she continued with her blockbuster solo career. Beyonce has sold millions of records, won numerous Grammys, is a lucrative spokeswoman for different products, and has also had considerable success in film with movies like the Oscar-winning "Dreamgirls" and the movie "Obsessed."

When Beyonce announced in May that she would no longer use her father to guide her career, she stressed that at almost 30, she was ready to take control of her own affairs and pledged her adoration for him.

"He is my father for life and I love my dad dearly. I am grateful for everything he has taught me," Beyonce said at the time.

On Thursday, Knowles said he had no problem with his daughter.

"The relationship with Beyonce is extremely amicable. I want to make that clear. Where there's concern is the people that she's doing business with," he said. "I'm challenging all of these folks on integrity, professional integrity."

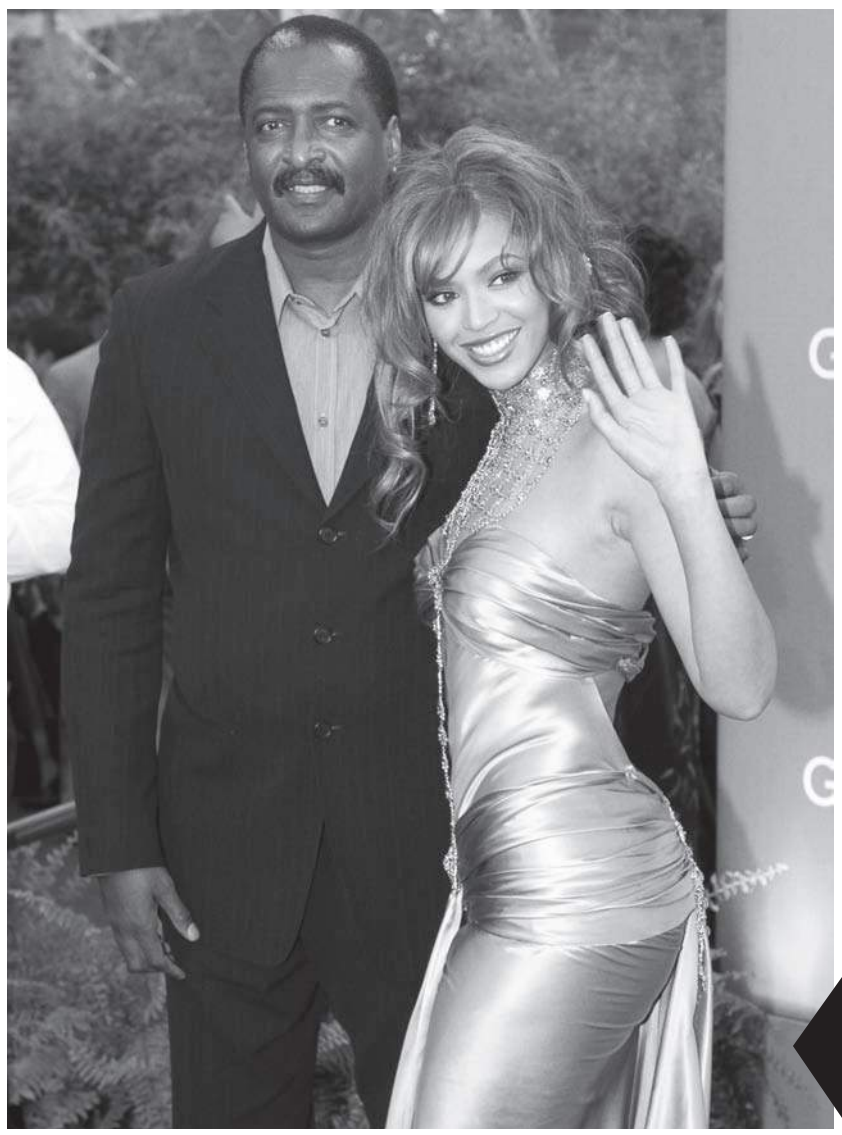
Knowles said he does not believe the allegations that he stole money from her are the reason why he was fired, and said his daughter completely cleaned house: "She changed almost every aspect of her business."

But he painted a picture of a concerted effort to oust him from the helm of her career.

"The team ironically appeared to be a cross-pollination of Beyonce's team, Roc Nation's team, and Live Nation's team, who ironically have the most to gain," he said.

When asked if there was a deliberate plan to take him out of the equation, he said: "I'll let people come to their own conclusion."

Knowles said he has not spoken to his daughter specifically about the allegations, but at one point told her: "The only way we will be able to understand this is through a court of law. That's the only way either one of us will be clear if someone in our camps did something that was not correct."



In this Feb. 8, 2004 file photo, singer Beyonce Knowles arrives at the 46th Annual Grammy Awards with her father and manager Mathew Knowles in Los Angeles. AP

Beyonce released her fourth solo album, "4," last month, and it debuted at the top of the charts, and remained at the top for the second week in a row this week. Still, it has yet to produce the kind of massive hits that Beyonce has charted routinely during her career, which has spanned more than a decade.

Knowles blames her camp and her label for that. "They put out the record in a vacuum," he said, adding that her success came despite setbacks.

"It makes you believe that there are some artists that don't need radio. There are some records that don't need a record label, and Beyonce is one of those artists," he said.

While Knowles had only positive things to say about his daughter, he acknowledged when asked that he they have not spoken since she let him go.

"We have not had that conversation," he said.

Representatives for Beyonce and Roc Nation did not respond to requests for comment. Columbia Records and Live Nation had no comment.

'Harry Potter' works new charms with $43M overseas

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Harry Potter has conjured up a tidy sum from the first overseas debuts of his final film on its way to a potentially record-shattering opening weekend.

Distributor Warner Bros. says "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2" took in $43.6 million in 26 countries outside the United States on its first day Wednesday.

Studio executives said Thursday the franchise finale had the biggest opening day ever in several countries, including Australia with $7.5 million, Italy with $4.6 million and Sweden with $2.1 million. In France, the studio said "Deathly Hallows: Part 2" had the biggest Wednesday opening ever at $7.1 million.

AP

In this film publicity image released by Warner Bros. Pictures, from left, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint and Daniel Radcliffe are shown in a scene from "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2."

In the countries where the film opened Wednesday, total revenues were 82 percent higher than they were on the first day for "Deathly Hallows: Part 1" last November, according to Warner Bros.

The finale got a boost from the franchise's first 3-D installment. Admissions for 3-D screenings, which cost a few dollars more than 2-D showings, accounted for 65 percent of revenues, the studio said.

"Deathly Hallows" continues opening worldwide Thursday and Friday.

In the United States, the film is expected to put up franchise-record numbers as it debuts just after midnight Friday. "Deathly Hallows: Part 1" had the franchise's biggest opening weekend domestically with $125 million.

"The franchise record, you can consider that history. That we're going to do. It's not a question," said Dan Fellman, head of distribution at Warner Bros., which also holds Hollywood's all-time record for domestic debuts with a $158.4 million weekend on 2008's "The Dark Knight."

"The only question is `Dark Knight,' whether we can put that together. My feeling at this time is that it's very, very do-able."

The 3-D price advantage for the "Harry Potter" finale will help, given that "The Dark Knight" and other top domestic debuts, including "Spider-Man 3" at $151.1 million and "The Twilight Saga: New Moon" at $142.8 million, played only in 2-D.

If fan frenzy is strong enough, "Deathly Hallows: Part 2" could become the first of the eight "Harry Potter" films to top $1 billion at the box office worldwide.

The record-holder remains the franchise's first film, 2001's "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," with $974.8 million globally.

By splitting the film adaptation of J.K. Rowling's seventh "Harry Potter" adventure into two parts, Warner Bros. essentially is doubling its box-office revenue. The first installment of "Deathly Hallows" pulled in $955.4 million worldwide.

"Deathly Hallows: Part 2" picks up where the first film left off, as young wizards Harry (Daniel Radcliffe), Hermione (Emma Watson) and Ron (Rupert Grint) return to Hogwarts school for a final showdown against dark Lord Voldemort (Ralph Fiennes).

The finale generally has earned glowing reviews from critics.

Daniel Baldwin files for divorce, claims violence

LAKE OSWEGO, Ore. (AP)—Actor Daniel Baldwin has filed for divorce and been granted a restraining order against his wife, claiming she punched him, threatened him with a knife in front of the couple's children and made threats of violence and death "too numerous to list."

Baldwin, 50, said police told him to take his children out of the couple's house on Sunday, where he said the children witnessed his wife punching him in the face.

Joanne Baldwin, 41, was arrested Wednesday night for violating her parole on a drunken driving conviction.

She has been jailed, and the police chief in Lake Oswego, the wealthy suburb where the couple has lived since 2010, said she isn't expected to be released until a hearing Wednesday.

Jail records do not show whether Joanne Baldwin has hired an attorney, and the jail does not permit phone interviews

Don Forman, the interim police chief in Lake Oswego, said Joanne Baldwin surrendered Wednesday in response to a warrant alleging she had violated terms of her probation from an earlier conviction for driving under the influence.

"One of our police staffers called her and strongly suggested that she turn herself in," Forman said.

She was arraigned Wednesday and is being held until a hearing next week, Forman said. He said he didn't have details about how she is alleged to have violated her probation.

AP

In this April 16, 2009 file photo, actor Daniel Baldwin, a cast member in "Grey Gardens," poses with his wife Joanne at the premiere of the HBO film in Los Angeles.

Baldwin has lived with his wife since 2006. The couple married in July 2007. He filed for divorce on Tuesday.

"There are so many instances of violence and death threats, they are too numerous to list," Baldwin wrote in a cramped scrawl in his request for a restraining order. "Sadly, all of them seem to occur in front of our children."

Lady Gaga's YouTube account is suspended

NEW YORK (AP)—Even one of online video's biggest stars isn't immune to copyright claims.

Lady Gaga's YouTube account was suspended Thursday. The notice read that the suspension was due to "multiple or severe violations of YouTube's copyright policy."

By late Thursday, the account had been restored, much to the glee of Gaga's Little Monsters.

The Google Inc.-owned YouTube declined to comment. It's YouTube policy to remove accounts after three copyright violations.

Reports have suggested that the infringing video was a recently uploaded clip of Gaga's performance on Fuji TV. Messages left with Gaga's publicist and record label, Interscope, weren't immediately returned Thursday.

The account, "ladygagaofficial," is one of two for Gaga. The removed channel is run by Gaga's camp, while she also has an unaffected Vevo account.

The Vevo account, which has more than 1.6 billion views, generally debuts her music videos. Co-owned by Universal Music Group and Sony Entertainment, Vevo is a music video platform that also distributes videos on YouTube.

On Thursday, Gaga's HBO concert special "Monster Ball Tour at Madison Square Garden" earned five Emmy Award nominations.

In this July 7, 2011 file photo, U.S. singer Lady Gaga gives a press conference ahead of her showcase concert at the Marina Bay Sands in Singapore. AP

'Glee' star Colfer braces for graduation day

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Glee" star Chris Colfer is having a mixed week, earning an Emmy nomination but facing his character's eventual graduation from high school and the show.

Colfer received his second Emmy nod Thursday for his "Glee" role as Kurt Hummel. The day before, a report said he and co-stars Corey Monteith and Lea Michele will leave the Fox series after the coming third season.

Colfer said he doesn't think any cast member wants to exit so soon but they accept that their characters can't stick around high school forever. As Colfer said: "Kids grow up. They move on."

Fox declined comment on the cast's future. Last month, series creator Ryan Murphy noted the "Glee" kids will be seniors next season and that the show should be true to the school experience.

O'Neal sues ex-Fawcett associate for defamation

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Ryan O'Neal sued a former associate of longtime partner Farrah Fawcett on Thursday, claiming the man is responsible for a Texas university's attempts to reclaim an Andy Warhol portrait of the actress.

O'Neal's defamation lawsuit against Craig Nevius Thursday seeks more than $1 million in damages and blames the actress' former collaborator for a lawsuit filed last week by the University of Texas system against O'Neal.

That lawsuit seeks return of a mixed-media portrait of Fawcett created by Warhol that Nevius and the university claim the actress bequeathed to the school's Austin, Texas campus.

O'Neal's lawsuit states that the school has known for more than a year that he has the portrait and that he is its rightful owner. He states Warhol gave it to him and that the two men had been friends long before the Fawcett artwork was created.

"O'Neal has no intention of ever parting with it during his lifetime, and upon his death he intends to bequeath it to his son and Ms. Fawcett's only child, Redmond O'Neal," the lawsuit states.

The lawsuit claims Nevius' interviews with "Good Morning America" and Star magazine that he had helped the university investigate the whereabouts of the Warhol portrait.

"Nevius' false, malicious and defamatory accusations that O'Neal stole the Warhol portrait are a desperate attempt to draw attention to himself by fabricating a controversy where none exists."

Nevius and O'Neal have sparred for years.

Nevius collaborated on a documentary of Fawcett's fight with cancer, but sued the actor claiming he interfered in the project and removed him from it shortly before Fawcett's 2009 death. The case was later dismissed.

In a statement, Nevius called the latest lawsuit an attempt to "further harass me into silence."

"I believe this is less about the portrait of Farrah Fawcett by Andy Warhol than it is about certain actions and events that occurred during the last few years of Farrah's life which I have knowledge of and that he (and others) would prefer me to never speak about," he wrote.

The University of Texas system's lawsuit filed July 8 claims O'Neal may be holding onto other pieces from Fawcett's art collection that she donated to the school and asked a judge to order the actor to ensure he properly stores and insures the Warhol piece.

"The Warhol portrait is an irreplaceable piece of art for which legal damages could not fully compensate," the university's lawsuit states.

AP

In this March 5, 1989 file photo, actors Ryan O'Neal, left, and Farrah Fawcett are shown at the premiere of the film.

Tone Loc pleads not guilty to domestic violence

BURBANK, Calif. (AP)—Prosecutors say rapper Tone Loc has pleaded not guilty to a felony domestic violence charge stemming from an arrest earlier this year.

The artist, whose real name is Anthony Smith, entered the plea in a Burbank, Calif., courthouse on Thursday. Known for the hits "Wild Thing" and "Funky Cold Medina," Smith was arrested in the city, which is north of Los Angeles on June 18.

He also faces a felony possession of an assault weapon charge because Burbank police discovered the rapper has an unregistered Colt AR-15 rifle.

He returns to court on July 28.

Police have released few details about the 45-year-old's arrest, saying only that he was taken into custody after a woman accused him of assault.

An after-hours phone message left for Smith's agent was not immediately returned.

AP

In this April 17, 1990 file photo, rapper Tone Loc, who was born Anthony Terrell Smith, appears at a news conference at the Nickerson Gardens housing project in the Watts section of Los Angeles.

Reluctance to talk crosses the line from shy to rude

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: My 12-year-old niece "Tammy" is very shy. When I recently visited my brother's home, she hid in her parents' bedroom behind a closed door. She wouldn't come out to say hi or even speak to me through the door.

Today I was on the phone with my sister-in-law and I asked if I could say hello to Tammy. I was told Tammy had left the room because she didn't want to talk. My sister-in-law then remarked that she has the shiest kids on Earth.

I think Tammy's parents should MAKE her speak to me (or anyone else) in person or on the phone. Am I wrong?

OUTGOING AUNT IN TEXAS

DEAR OUTGOING AUNT: Tammy's behavior is rude, and her mother is covering for her. If Tammy has such overwhelming social anxiety that she cannot exchange even the briefest social amenities, she needs the help of a therapist to help her overcome it.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have worked in a medical office for a number of years. We all get along like a family and there are rarely any problems. However, something has been bothering me since one of my co-workers' (unmarried) daughter had a baby.

We all bought gifts for the baby and tolerate the many pictures and recitation of day-to-day events of the baby, but now the first birthday is here. I received an invitation and was told what they would like to receive, plus a wallet photo of the child and a larger photo with a magnet on it.

Many of us have grandchildren, but we have never gone overboard this way. I would never impose an invitation on my co-workers to attend any of my grandchildren's birthday parties. My feeling is that grandchildren parties are for families! What to do?

FRETTING IN OHIO

DEAR FRETTING: Fret no more. Politely decline the invitation and say you have other plans. (You do—you plan not to attend or be milked for a gift.) Stand firm now, because if you don't, you will be invited to every birthday party the kid has until he or she is an adult.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: We are progressive parents, but conservative about social issues. We have a problem on which we disagree and we have agreed to abide by your answer.

Our three children are all in high school. Our older daughter has a good friend—a boy who is gay. We like him very much and he has visited our home many times. However, our daughter would like to invite him to a sleepover, as she does with her girlfriends.

Is it appropriate for a teenage girl to have a gay boyfriend on a sleepover?

PUZZLED PARENTS IN THE NORTHWEST

DEAR PUZZLED PARENTS: I see no reason why an "out" gay teenage boy shouldn't attend your daughter's sleepover. Their relationship is the same as the ones she has with her girlfriends.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My husband thinks it's OK to read over someone's shoulder. I have tried explaining that I think it's rude, but he says I'm rude for asking him not to do it. He thinks I have something to hide if I tell him to stop. What say you?

NOTHING TO HIDE IN OHIO

DEAR NOTHING TO HIDE: I say you married a man who is insecure and suspicious, and you have my sympathy.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

HOW ARE THINGS GOING WITH THAT HOT YOUNG GIRL YOU'VE BEEN SEEING?
WELL, I DYED MY HAIR DARKER, I WAXED MY CHEST AND STARTED HITTING THE GYM.
THEN SHE LEFT ME FOR AN OLDER GUY.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Out of — (ailing)
6 Parallelogram type
11 Illegible handwriting
12 Arm of the Mediterranean
14 Body image?
15 Bewitch, in a way
16 Raw rock
17 Vigorous
19 Copper head
20 SI and GQ, e.g.
22 Actor Holbrook
23 Test tube
24 Diminish
26 Echoes
28 Freddy's street
30 Can makeup
31 Followed relentlessly
35 Amble
39 Scoop holder
40 Greek cross
42 Artist Joan
43 Is pluralized
44 Kingdom subdivisions
46 Weep
47 Panda chow
49 Nutty
51 Protect
52 Old numbers?
53 Board meeting topic
54 Reddish horses

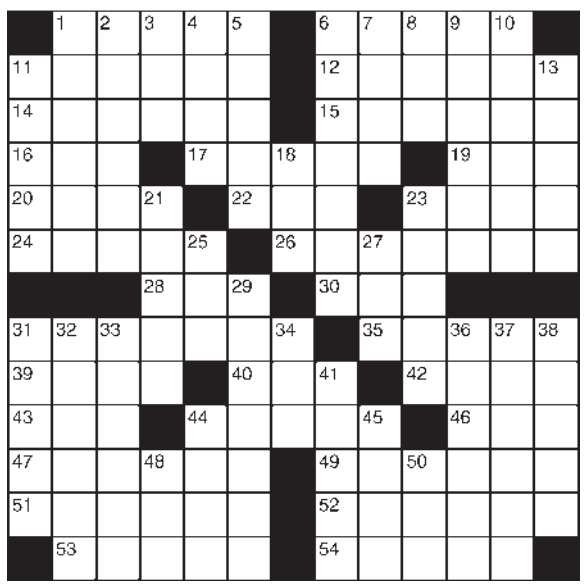
DOWN

1 Ornamental beetle
2 Old El Paso competitor
3 Scoundrel
4 "— company, ..."
5 Laziness
6 Mini-stream
7 Derisive laugh
8 Lennon's lady
9 In the sky
10 Tropical tree
11 Plant pore
13 Christmas refrains
18 Tholes hold it
21 Commemorative pillar
23 Poison
25 Wapiti
27 Energy
29 Ways
31 Wound covers
32 Synagogue scrolls
33 Hemoglobin deficiency
34 Rotation duration
36 Nauseate
37 Glitches
38 Vacillates
41 Stomach woe
44 Flag holder
45 Car
48 — canto
50 Half a dance

Solution time: 27 mins.

U	N	C	A	P		A	C	T		W	A	D
P	E	A	S	E		C	O	O		O	B	I
S	T	R	A	P		C	A	R	A	V	A	N
		A	P	P	L	E	T		B	E	T	A
S	A	M		Y	E	S		G	O	N	E	R
A	R	E	A		A	S	K	E	D			
C	E	L	L	A	R		A	M	E	C	H	E
			A	N	N	O	Y		S	A	I	L
C	A	N	S	T		K	A	L		R	P	M
A	M	O	K		D	A	K	O	T	A		
C	A	R	A	W	A	Y		C	O	V	E	T
H	I	M		A	V	E		A	R	E	N	A
E	N	S		R	E	D		L	I	L	A	C

Yesterday's answer 7-16



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99c per minute. touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: AnnaLynne McCord, 24; Jayma Mays, 32; Corey Feldman, 40; Will Ferrell, 44.

Happy Birthday: Take heed of what's working for you and what isn't. Prepare to cut your losses and move in the direction that will best suit your needs. There is plenty you can do to save money and get back on track. Living within your means will be necessary. Look for additional ways to bring in more household income. Your numbers are 4, 13, 21, 28, 33, 39, 46.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): An unusual financial opportunity will tempt you, but don't be too quick to buy into something you know little about. Don't let compliments go to your head. Take advantage of what's being offered, remembering that nothing is free and that complications are likely to arise. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You may not like the changes going on at work or in your industry, but if you are patient, you will benefit. Timing will be important, so get your long-term strategy in place. Love is on the rise, and a partnership you cherish will bring good fortune. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Work alongside people you find mentally and emotionally stimulating. The more freedom you have to be creative, the better your performance will become. Discuss your plans with someone who can contribute. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't limit what you can accomplish because of indecisiveness. Investments will pay off if you put your money into innovative projects that have plenty of room to grow. A love connection will prove to be hotter than you thought. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Honesty will play a major role in a decision. Say little if you cannot be complimentary. You will be judged by the way you handle others. A promise you make will change your life and your beliefs forever. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Strive for greater satisfaction and doing whatever it takes to enhance your reputation. Your past experience can play a major role in how you handle people and situations now. A detailed account of what you want and what you don't will help you get your way. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You will have to look for ways to please people if you want to avoid complaints. Put more effort into your home. Don't overdo it or you will become fatigued and prone to physical mishaps. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Traveling, socializing, trying new things and pursuing self-improvements should be penciled in to your schedule. A mini vacation will be rejuvenating and will enhance your love life. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Acknowledging what others do for you will bring you even greater favors in the future. A partnership will keep you busy, and your interest will grow in developing a closer bond. A change of scenery will do you good and feed your imagination. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Proceed with caution. Not everyone will have your best interests at heart. Spend time with the people you know you can trust and who support your plans. A property deal can decrease your overhead and ease your stress. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You can implement a budget that will help you stabilize your future. Put effort into a home-based business or finding a unique way to make extra cash on the side. Express your emotions honestly and you will make an impression on someone. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Avoid feeling sorry for yourself or thinking everyone has more than you do. Focus on love, romance and socializing. Spend less time dwelling on what you don't have and more time trying to build your confidence and your assets. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are inventive and innovative. You are a powerful communicator and persistent competitor.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		1	2	3	6	5		
		4				9		
3				5				4
4			6	8	1			5
9				4				6
		7				2		
		3	5	7	9	1		

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 7/16

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	9	3	7	8	2	4	5	1
4	7	5	3	6	1	2	9	8
1	2	8	4	5	9	6	7	3
3	5	2	1	4	7	8	6	9
9	6	1	8	3	5	7	4	2
7	8	4	2	9	6	1	3	5
5	1	6	9	7	8	3	2	4
2	4	9	6	1	3	5	8	7
8	3	7	5	2	4	9	1	6

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 7/16

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SPORTS! Solution: 7 letters

G	G	G	C	F	B	A	S	K	E	T	B	A	L	L
N	N	N	U	I	H	A	N	D	B	A	L	L	E	L
I	I	I	R	S	G	P	L	A	Y	L	A	G	K	A
L	K	N	V	H	N	W	L	B	A	B	N	L	I	B
T	A	I	S	I	I	I	G	B	Y	I	A	S	B	T
S	Y	A	E	N	D	U	E	E	D	O	M	A	W	O
E	A	G	S	G	R	S	L	R	G	R	D	O	T	O
R	K	O	S	N	A	L	A	N	E	M	H	A	G	F
W	N	R	A	B	O	O	I	T	I	S	O	L	G	G
T	G	E	P	V	B	L	A	N	H	B	C	L	N	N
E	N	K	P	E	W	W	T	W	A	L	K	A	I	I
N	I	C	T	O	O	O	S	P	A	C	E	B	C	L
N	I	A	B	G	N	I	T	N	U	H	Y	T	N	I
I	K	R	A	C	S	A	N	G	U	I	D	E	E	A
S	S	T	R	A	L	A	I	T	R	A	M	N	F	S

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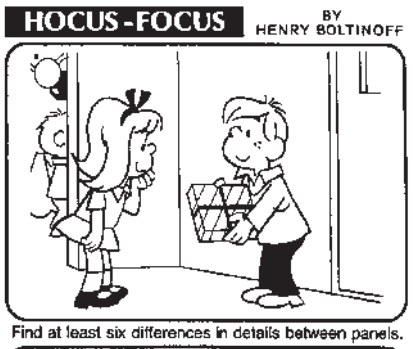
Athletes, Badminton, Baseball, Basketball, Bike, Boat, Bowling, Diving, Fencing, Fishing, Football, Goal, Guide, Handball, Hockey, Hunting, Kayaking, Martial Arts, NASCAR, Netball, Open, Passes, Play, Rogaining, Rugby, Sailing, Show, Skateboarding, Skiing, Snowboarding, Space, Tennis, Terms, Track, Volleyball, Walk, Water, Wins, Wrestling

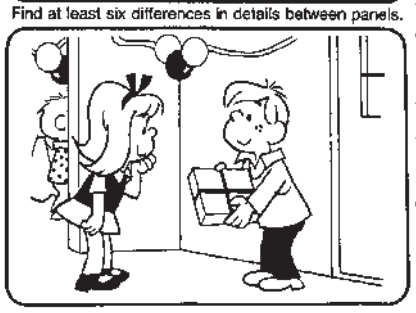
Yesterday's Answer: Pizza

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. No stripes on gift. 2. No socks on girl. 3. Girl's skirt is different. 4. Balloons are added. 5. Window pane is added. 6. Boy's shirt has dots.

Wishing Well®

3	5	8	5	3	6	2	6	5	2	8	3	7
P	F	B	O	R	B	A	E	R	B	U	O	B
8	3	7	5	3	8	2	4	2	5	3	5	2
S	M	E	G	O	I	I	M	L	I	T	V	I
7	2	7	3	2	8	7	3	8	2	3	8	4
C	T	H	I	I	N	A	O	E	E	N	S	A
7	5	8	3	2	3	5	2	4	2	8	5	4
R	E	S	A	S	T	E	R	K	E	T	N	E
8	7	5	8	4	6	8	5	4	5	7	2	5
R	I	E	I	A	H	P	M	M	I	T	C	E
6	3	7	3	6	5	7	2	3	7	3	6	4
E	W	A	O	L	S	B	O	R	L	K	P	E
2	6	2	6	4	7	6	2	4	2	4	2	2
G	F	N	U	N	E	L	I	D	Z	S	E	D

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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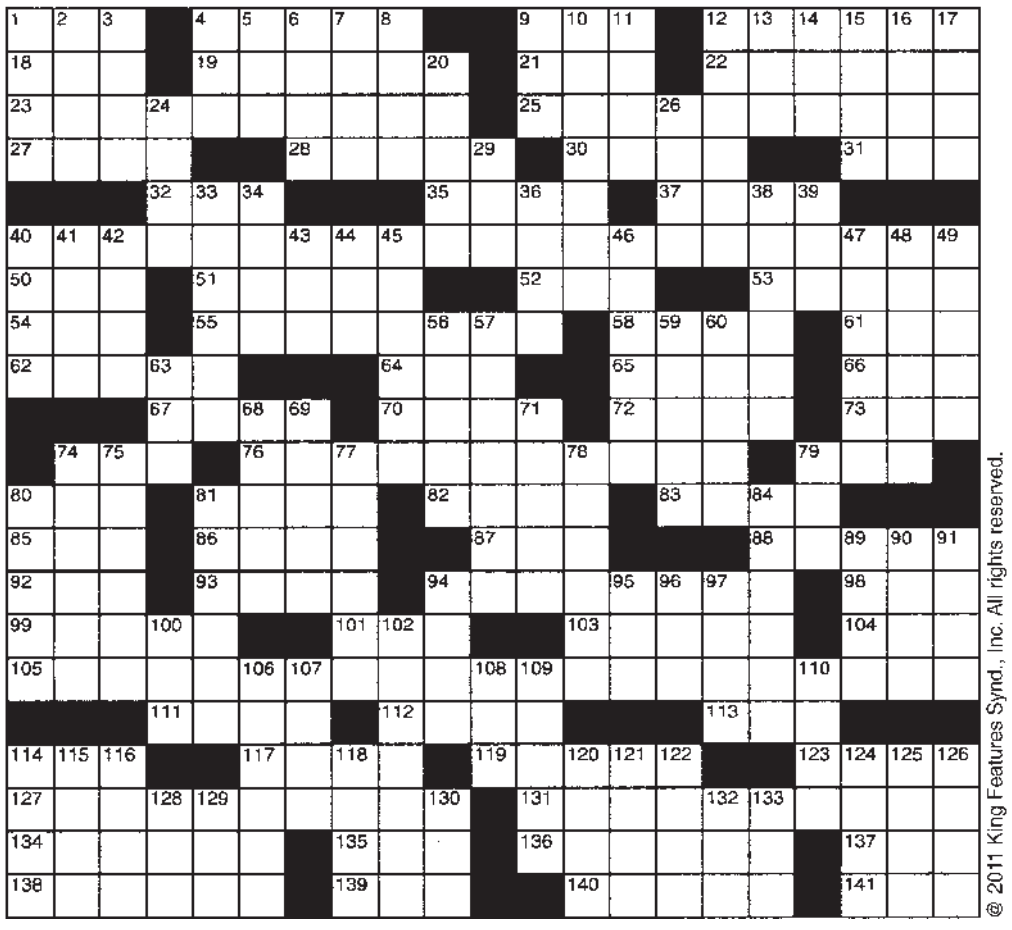
Super Crossword STEP SAVER

ACROSS

1 Costa del —
4 Shed
9 Giant legend
12 European capital
18 Important numero
19 First name in aviation
21 Word with jacket or soup
22 January stoat
23 Start of a remark by 131 Across
25 Jurassic giant
27 Powerful beasts
28 Fancy fabric
30 Goes downhill fast?
31 Summer hrs.
32 Neighbor of Nev.
35 Barnyard butter
37 When pigs fly, to Tennyson
40 Part 2 of remark
50 Flamenco dancer's shout
51 Use a colander
52 Rage
53 Supermarket section
54 Novelist Radcliffe
55 Like some light fixtures
58 Adriatic seaport
61 Capp's "— Abner"
62 Sample the souffle
64 Minnesota twins?
65 Gen. Robt. —
66 Skater Midori
67 Exchange
70 Camping equipment
72 A bad figure?
73 Fabric suffix
74 Mayberry aunt
76 Part 3 of remark
79 Misjudge
80 Rocky hill
81 Pianist Templeton
82 Swing around
83 Periodic table info
85 "My — True Love" ('54 song)
86 Tabula —
87 D-Day craft
88 Herbert Hoover, for one
92 Cookbook phrase
93 "Suspect" star
94 Agitated
98 Cry's partner
99 Actress Berger
101 Palindromic title
103 Lenya or Lehmann
104 — premium
105 End of remark
111 Judge
112 Copley or Hatcher
113 Room for improvement?
114 Drink like a dachshund
117 Imminent
119 "— Gay"
123 Presque —, ME
127 Simple, to Sherlock
131 Speaker of the remark
134 Acid neutralizer
135 Tell it like it isn't
136 Provokes
137 A mean Amin
138 Micawber portrayer
139 Author Wallace
140 Indian state
141 Damone or Dana

DOWN

1 Rotund wrestling?
2 Black
3 Chris of The Pet Shop Boys
4 Brit. fliers
5 Rob Roy's uncle
6 Basilica features
7 Director Kazan
8 Cheerful song
9 — -Locka, FL
10 '62 Tornadoes hit
11 It may be small
12 Tenant
13 Lyricist Gershwin
14 Dallas coll.
15 Roc or robin
16 Burden
17 Heron's home
20 Do a mechanic's job
24 Machu Picchu native
26 Sty cry
29 Eggy beverage
33 One of the Jacksons
34 Apollo's instrument
36 In the thick of
38 TV's "The Courtship of — Father"
39 Nutritional abbr.
40 Gravy vessel
41 Forearm bone
42 Itches
43 Middle of a game?
44 Hasten
45 Entomologist's concern
46 Defies a dictator
47 More obsequious
48 Susann or Steinbeck
49 Cordage material
56 Deceives
57 Actress Parsons
59 "Hi, Ho!"
60 Adjust a timer
63 Poetic monogram
68 Islamic deity
69 Bel —
71 Cubbins' creator
74 Alley cat?
75 Verdi hero
77 Amulet motif
78 Fish container?
79 WWII area
80 It may be eaten or drunk
81 Penny —
84 With prudence
89 Cry of surprise
90 Self starter?
91 Around the corner
94 "Martha the Mouth"
95 — Gatos, CA
96 Catchall abbr.
97 Forest father
100 Designer Lapidus
102 "Alice's Restaurant" star
106 Court sport
107 Leave out
108 Is for two
109 Sapporo spy
110 "Time's Arrow" author
114 Table extender
115 "— Need" ('67 song)
116 Pedigreed pooch
118 Vex
120 Geraldine Chaplin's mom
121 Mr. Diamond
122 Affirmative votes
124 Hood's weapon
125 City near Stockton
126 Really big
128 Bad beginning
129 Antiquity, in antiquity
130 Evergreen tree
132 Lingerie item
133 The end?



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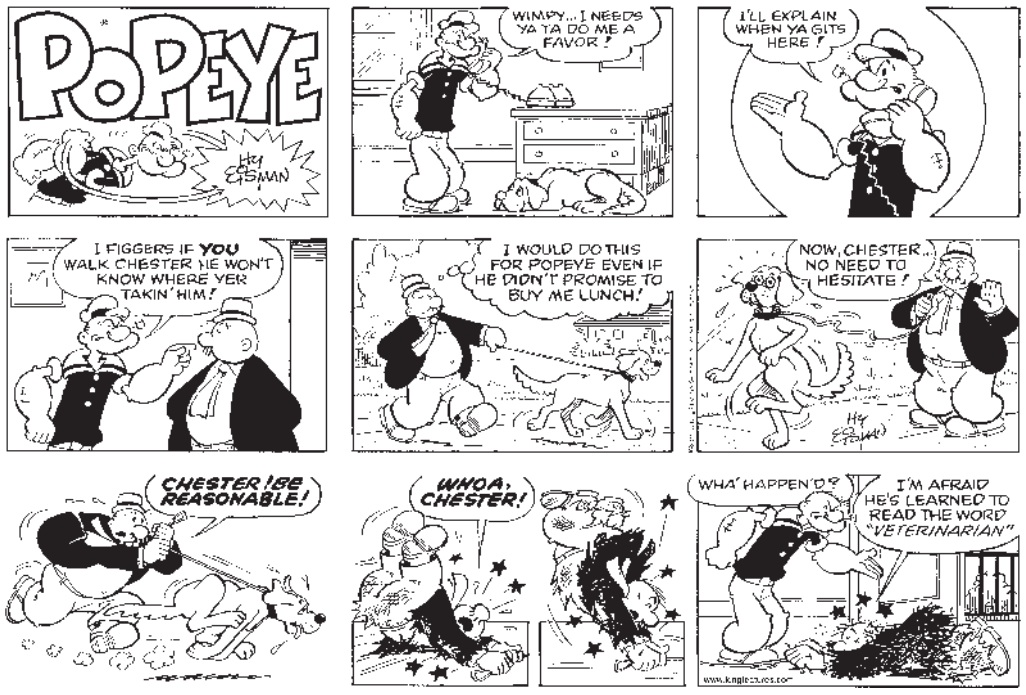
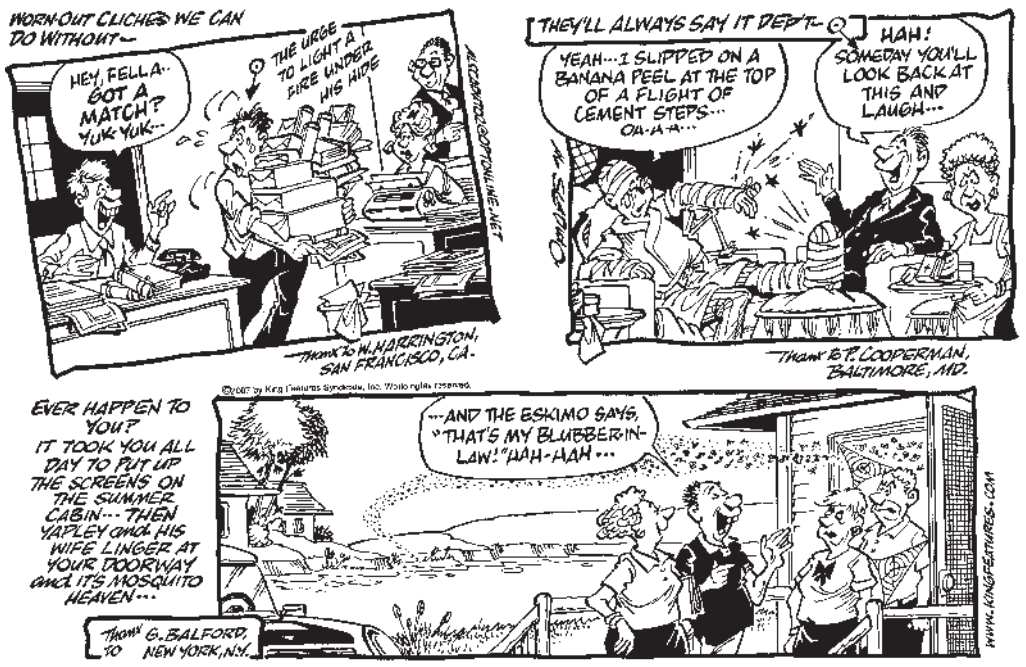

POPEYE
Hey EISMAN
WIMPY... I NEEDS YA TA DO ME A FAVOR!
I'LL EXPLAIN WHEN YA GITS HERE!
I FIGGERS IF YOU WALK CHESTER HE WON'T KNOW WHERE YER TAKIN' HIM!
I WOULD DO THIS FOR POPEYE EVEN IF HE DIDN'T PROMISE TO BUY ME LUNCH!
NOW, CHESTER... NO NEED TO HESITATE!
CHESTER! BE REASONABLE!
WHOA, CHESTER!
WHA' HAPPEN'D?
I'M AFRAID HE'S LEARNED TO READ THE WORD "VETERINARIAN"

They'll Do It Every Time — by Al Scaduto


WORN-OUT CLICHÉS WE CAN DO WITHOUT—
HEY, FELLA.. GOT A MATCH? YUK-YUK...
THE URGE TO LIGHT A FIRE UNDER HIS HIDE
Thanks to W. HARRINGTON, SAN FRANCISCO, CA.
THEY'LL ALWAYS SAY IT DEP'T—
YEAH... I SLIPPED ON A BANANA PEEL AT THE TOP OF A FLIGHT OF CEMENT STEPS... OA-A-A-...
HAH! SOMEDAY YOU'LL LOOK BACK AT THIS AND LAUGH...
Thanks to P. COOPERMAN, BALTIMORE, MD.
EVER HAPPEN TO YOU? IT TOOK YOU ALL DAY TO PUT UP THE SCREENS ON THE SUMMER CABIN... THEN YAPLEY AND HIS WIFE LINGER AT YOUR DOORWAY AND IT'S MOSQUITO HEAVEN...
...AND THE ESKIMO SAYS, "THAT'S MY BLUBBER-IN-LAW!" HAH-HAH...
Thanks to G. BALFORD, NEW YORK, N.Y.
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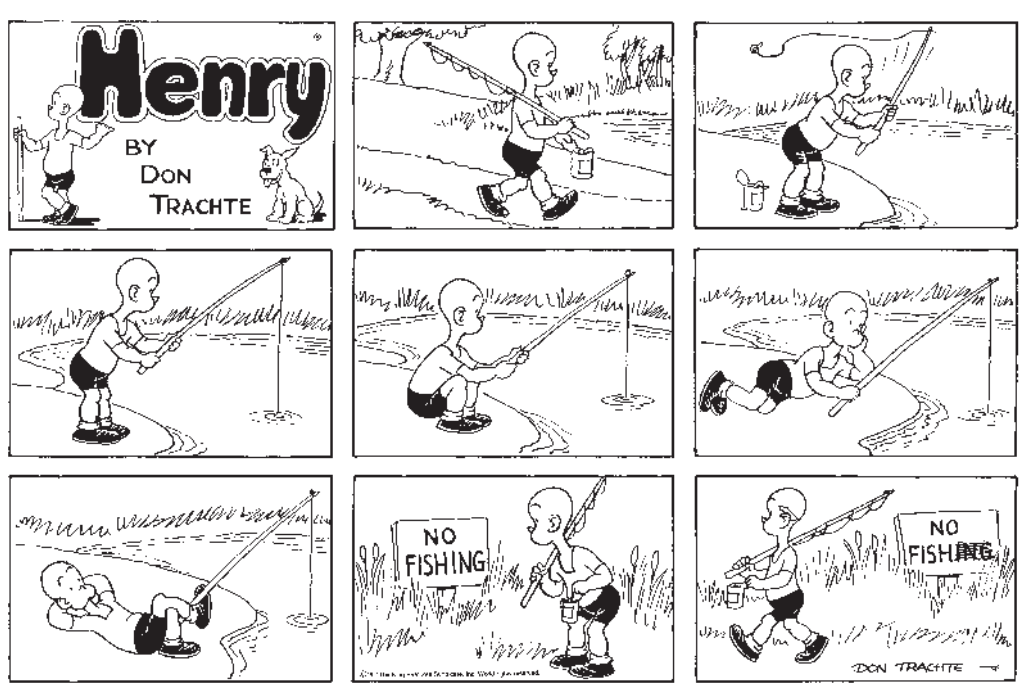

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. PHILOSOPHY: "Moderation in all things" is attributed to which Roman dramatist?
2. HISTORY: The Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact of 1939 helped pave the way for what major historical event?
3. ASTRONOMY: Ganymede is the largest moon of what planet?
4. WORLD LEADERS: A prince or king called a "maharajah" likely would be found in which country?
5. GEOGRAPHY: What country is nearest to the Gulf of Carpentaria?
6. LITERATURE: Where do most of the Hobbits live?
7. MUSIC: What singing duo originally called themselves Tom and Jerry?
8. ARCHITECTURE: Who designed the Jefferson Memorial?
9. LANGUAGE: What does the term "noblesse oblige" mean?
10 RELIGION: Who was a founding influence in the Presbyterian Church?

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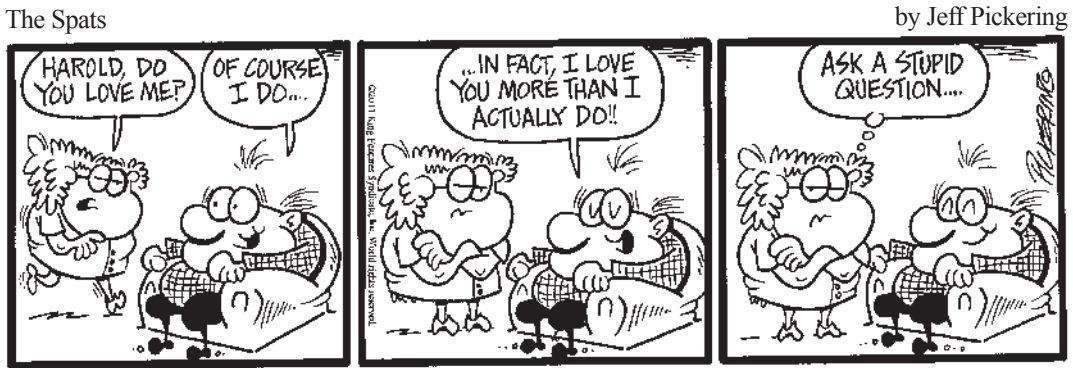
Answers

1. Terence
2. World War II
3. Jupiter
4. India
5. Australia
6. The Shire
7. Simon and Garfunkel
8. John Russell Pope
9. Those of high rank or birth are obligated to be honorable, generous and responsible.
10. John Calvin

Saturday's Answers

The Spats — by Jeff Pickering



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• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

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Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:

- All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/ 24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Right behind NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Special rates for NMC faculty/ students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Night-time security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Night-time security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

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Bar GAIA for Sale!! $20,000.00 or best offer. Great location-behind Tony Roma's. Bar is fully furnished. Includes great collection of music videos. Must see to appreciate. Pls contact 483-3415 or email: steve78chae@gmail.com

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Pastimes
By Jim Davis
By Bill Waterson
Garfield
By Glenn McCoy
Alomar, Blyleven elected to Hall of Fame
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Sports
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on to beat Spu
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Minor wins doubles in Australia
By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Thea Minor ended her campaign in the 2011 Goulburn Valley Junior Championships in Australia on a high note after capturing the doubles crown in the U18 division of the five-day tournament.
Saipan Tribune
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FRIDAY JANUARY 7, 2011
REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK
Sablan, other delegates come out swinging as 112th
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Judge declares mistrial in Clemens case

WASHINGTON (AP)—Almost as soon as it began, former baseball star Roger Clemens' perjury trial ended Thursday—in a mistrial the judge blamed on prosecutors and said a "first-year law student" would have known to avoid.

U.S. District Judge Reggie Walton left the question of a new trial up in the air. But he called a halt to the trial under way after prosecutors showed jurors evidence that he had ruled out—videotaped revelations that a teammate had said he'd told his wife Clemens confessed to using a drug.

Walton scolded prosecutors and said he couldn't let the former All-Star pitcher face prison if convicted on such "extremely prejudicial" evidence.

"Mr. Clemens has to get a fair trial," Walton said. "In my view, he can't get it now."

Defense attorney Rusty Hardin, who had asked for the mistrial declaration, patted an unsmiling Clemens on the back as the judge announced his decision. As he left the courthouse, Clemens did not comment but accepted hugs from a couple of court workers, shook hands with the security guards and autographed baseballs for fans waiting outside.

The quick end on only the second day of testimony was the second mistrial involving a superstar player accused in baseball's steroids scandal. Home run king Barry Bonds was convicted three months ago of obstruction of justice, but a mistrial was called on three more serious false-statements charges after jurors couldn't agree on a verdict.

Walton said he would hold a hearing Sept. 2 to decide whether Clemens should face another trial. Hardin told reporters, "I wouldn't even hazard a guess" about what Walton will decide.

Walton could end the prosecution by declaring that a new trial would run afoul of double jeopardy—the right not to be brought to trial twice on the same charges for the same offense. But experts said it was unlikely that he would go that far, especially since the trial was just under way.

AP

Former Major League baseball pitcher Roger Clemens gestures as he leaves federal court in Washington, Thursday, July 14, 2011, after the judge declared a mistrial in his perjury trial after prosecutors showed jurors evidence that the judge had ruled out of bounds.

"Generally speaking, mistrial does not bar a trial of the defendant when the defendant requested the mistrial," said Harry Sandick, a former prosecutor who now defends white-collar cases. He said a judge may make an exception for misconduct on the part of prosecutors, but this appears to have been a simple yet devastating mistake.

"How could the government not have reviewed each piece of evidence after the court's pretrial rulings?" he said. "This is crucially important, and prosecutors have to do this all the time."

New York Yankees star shortstop Derek Jeter, once a teammate of Clemens', said after the mistrial was declared: "I'm no legal expert, but you want it to be behind him. Obviously, the more attention that's paid to that, it's just negative for the game in general."

The U.S. attorney's office in Washington, which tried the case, said it would have no comment because of Walton's gag order. Clemens also stayed mum.

"I'm not going to say anything," Clemens said as he left the courthouse. He and his legal team ducked into a nearby restaurant to escape the media horde following him.

The Clemens mistrial was the biggest embarrassment for the Justice Department in a high-profile case since the prosecution of Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, in which the government failed to turn over evidence favorable to the defense. That failure, two years ago, was so serious that Attorney General Eric Holder stepped in and asked a federal judge to throw out Stevens' convictions. The judge did so.

The unraveling of the current case began as prosecutors were showing jurors a video of Clemens' 2008 testimony before Congress. He is accused of lying under oath during that testimony when he said he never used performance-enhancing drugs during his 24-season career.

Clemens' former teammate and close friend, Andy Pettitte, had told committee investigators that Clemens confessed in 1999 or 2000 that he used human growth hormone. Clemens has said Pettitte "misremembers" or "misheard" their conversation.

Prosecutors had wanted to call Laura Pettitte as a witness to back up her husband's account because she says her husband told her about the conversation the day it happened. But Walton had said Laura Pettitte's statement wasn't admissible since it didn't involve direct knowledge of what Clemens said.

In the video prosecutors showed the jury, Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., referred to Pettitte's conversation with his wife during the questioning of Clemens. Walton quickly cut off the tape and called attorneys to the bench for a private conversation for several minutes. The video remained frozen on the screen in front of jurors with a transcript of what was being said on the bottom.

Cummings had been quoting from Laura Pettitte's affidavit to the committee. "I, Laura Pettitte, do depose and state, in 1999 or 2000, Andy told me he had a conversation with Roger Clemens in which Roger admitted to him using human growth hormones," the text on the screen read.

The judge eventually told the jurors to leave while he discussed the issue with attorneys in open court. Hardin asked for a mistrial, while prosecutors suggested the problem could be fixed with an instruction to the jury to disregard the evidence. Walton responded that they could never know what impact the evidence would have during the jury's deliberations.

"I don't see how I un-ring the bell," he said.

"Government counsel should have been more cautious," Walton said, raising his voice and noting that the case had already cost a lot of taxpayer money.

"I think that a first-year law student would know that you can't bolster the credibility of one witness with clearly inadmissible evidence," Walton said.

He said it was the second time that prosecutors had gone against his orders. The other occurred during opening arguments Wednesday when assistant U.S. attorney Steven Durham said Pettitte and two other of Clemens' New York teammates, Chuck Knoblauch and Mike Stanton, had used human growth hormone.

Walton said in pre-trial hearings that such testimony could lead jurors to consider Clemens guilty by association. Clemens' defense attorney objected when Durham made the statement Wednesday and Walton told jurors to disregard Durham's comments about other players.

Joshua Berman, a white collar defense lawyer who used to work with Durham and Butler when he was at the Justice Department, said both men have excellent reputations as ethical and responsible attorneys.

"I think that mistakes get made, frankly, and they get made in every trial on both sides," Berman said. "Unfortunately here you are on Day One of a very high-profile trial."

Blue Jays top Yankees for fourth straight win

TORONTO (AP)—Edwin Encarnacion and Eric Thames had three hits and three RBIs each and Toronto used an eight-run first inning to beat New York 16-7 on Thursday night.

The Blue Jays set season highs in runs and hits (20) to win their fourth straight game.

Toronto lost slugger Jose Bautista to a twisted right ankle in the fourth inning. Bautista, who leads the majors with 31 home runs, limped off after an awkward slide into third base. He is day-to-day.

Andruw Jones hit two home runs but the Yankees couldn't extend a nine-year streak of winning their first game following the All-Star break.

Left-hander Jo-Jo Reyes (5-7) allowed seven runs and 10 hits in 5 1-3 innings.

Rangers 5, Mariners 0

At Seattle, Derek Holland was perfect through five innings and finished with a five-hitter as Texas won its season-high eighth straight.

It was Holland's fourth career complete game—all shutouts—his third this season and second straight. He went the route in his previous outing July 7, a 6-0 win against Oakland.

Holland (8-4), who matched his career high for wins, retired the first 15 batters until walking Franklin Gutierrez on a 3-2 pitch to open the sixth. He then lost his no-hitter when the next batter, Chone Figgins singled to right.

Indians 8, Orioles 4

At Baltimore, Asdrubal Cabrera and Carlos Santana homered and Justin Masterson struck out eight in six innings as Cleveland extended Baltimore's losing streak to eight games.

The victory moved the Indians into first place in the AL Central, percentage points ahead of idle Detroit. Cleveland lost three straight before the All-Star break to fall out of first for the first time since June 28.

Cabrera and Santana connected in a three-run first inning against Jeremy Guthrie (3-13). Cleveland is 4-0 against Baltimore this season, outscoring the Orioles 28-11.

Masterson (8-6) gave up four runs and eight hits while improving to 3-0 in his last three starts.

Twins 8, Royals 4

At Minneapolis, Trevor Plouffe hit a two-run homer and Delmon Young had three hits in his return to the lineup to lead Minnesota.

Francisco Liriano (6-7) gave up three runs—one earned—and seven hits with four strikeouts in seven innings and Joe Mauer had two hits and two RBIs for the Twins.

Melky Cabrera had two hits, an RBI and threw a runner out at home from center field for the Royals, who watched their bullpen let a close game get out of hand.

Right-hander Blake Wood walked three and hit another batter while being charged with four runs in the seventh inning in relief of Bruce Chen (5-3), who gave up four runs and nine hits with three walks in five innings.

Cubs 6, Marlins 3

At Chicago, pinch-hitter Greg Dobbs delivered a two-run double against closer Carlos Marmol walked three straight hitters, and Florida scored six runs in the ninth inning to rally for a 6-3 victory over Chicago on Thursday night, extended its season-high winning streak to six games.

The Marlins trailed 2-0 before sending 11 batters to the plate in their final at-bat.

Matt Garza threw seven scoreless innings for Chicago and Sean Marshall worked the eighth, but Marmol (2-3) picked up his seventh blown save.

He walked Mike Stanton, Mike Cameron, and John Buck, throwing just one strike in the process, and Dobbs followed with his double that along with a throwing error gave Florida a 3-2 lead.

Rockies 12, Brewers 3

At Denver, Ryan Spilborghs had a home run among four hits and Ubaldo Jimenezpitched six solid innings for Colorado.

Spilborghs finished a triple shy of the cycle while registering his first four-hit games in more than two seasons. Ty Wigginton and Ian Stewart had three hits each for the Rockies, who had a season-high 20 hits.

Jimenez (5-8) allowed two runs and six hits, walked two and struck out four to earn just his second win at home in 2011. Jimenez has won four of his last six starts after beginning the season 1-7.

Giants 6, Padres 2

At San Diego, Aubrey Huff hit a tying homer off All-Star closer Heath Bell leading off the ninth inning and Mike Fontenot(notes) brought in the go-ahead run with a bases-loaded walk with two outs in the 12th, helping the NL West-leading San Francisco Giants beat the last-place San Diego Padres 6-2 on Thursday night.

The bullpen collapse extended the Padres' losing streak to six games, tying their season high.

Bell was trying to preserve a 1-0 win for Aaron Harang, who threw seven strong innings in his second start back from a stint on the disabled list. But Huff muscled an 0-2 pitch several rows into the stands down the right-field line for his ninth homer.

Courage, fortitude key Japan at Women's World Cup

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)—Meticulous planning and execution are everything in Japanese soccer. So when the team falls behind, there is a system to rely on, a belief there is still a way to win.

Japan is in its first Women's World Cup final, and its quick passing could pose a challenge for the favored United States on Sunday.

Coach Norio Sasaki has been planning for this moment since the 2008 Olympics.

"In Beijing, we finished fourth and, at the time, it was our intention," Sasaki said. "This time we said, 'Let's go to the final.'"

Then March 11 arrived. The earthquake and tsunami left nearly 23,000 dead or missing.

TEPCO Mareeze, the club of national team defender Aya Sameshima, withdrew from the Japanese league for the season. She eventually signed as a free agent, half a world away, with the Boston Breakers in the United States.

The Japanese league was delayed by a month at a time when national team preparations were getting intense. But Sasaki knew his players' fundamentals were strong, drilled into them by the years of the hard training for which he is known. He had no doubt the team would endure in the face of catastrophe.

AP

Japan's Aya Miyama, left, and Schweden's Charlotte Rohlin go for a header during their semifinals game in the Women's World Cup, Wednesday, July 13, 2011, in Germany.

His team did more than that—it thrived.

In the quarterfinals, Japan played a two-time defending champion German team boosted by a sellout home crowd. Hours before the start, Sasaki had his players look at slides of the devastation from March. Aya Miyama said the images touched everyone.

Against great odds, Japan won 1-0, setting up a semifinal with Sweden. This time, there was no need for photographs and shock treatment. Now the challenge was tactical, with the small Japanese facing the big Swedes.

On their 21-player rosters, the Japanese have only one woman taller than 5-foot-7, while the Swedes have only five smaller than that height. Many thought the Swedes would exploit that advantage.

Japan won, 3-1.

"We just paid a lot of attention and our coach told us to keep the ball low, not to play any high balls," Miyama said. "That is what we did."

Sasaki says the key is ball control, good passing, team spirit.

"Everyone has to be involved," he said.

Japan, by far, has showcased the most discipline during the three-week tournament, and its dedication is never more evident than when the team is down. Sweden scored early, but Japan's approach did not change. It had been facing such games for years.

"We stayed calm and we decided: We are just going to do what we practiced, and if we do that there will be a good result," Miyama said.

Three goals eventually came, giving the fans back home something to cheer.

"Even little things, like a win, can give people courage and hope," Sasaki said. "And when we play the final, we are not going to think about the end result. We are just going to do what we can."

NFL players, owners making progress

NEW YORK (AP)—Significant progress on a major sticking point in the NFL labor impasse—soaring rookie salaries—during marathon talks Thursday raised hopes that a tentative agreement in principle could perhaps come within 24 hours, according to two people familiar with the negotiations.

They cautioned, however, that other key issues remained for owners and players to resolve, including free agency and new offseason workout rules.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the negotiations aimed at ending the NFL's four-month-long lockout are supposed to be confidential.

With time running short to keep the preseason intact, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, NFL Players Association head DeMaurice Smith, eight owners and about a half-dozen current or former players met for a second consecutive day of lengthy negotiations—nearly 15 hours on Thursday alone. They were going to meet again at a Manhattan law firm on Friday as they attempt to end the sport's first work stoppage since 1987.

When the last of the participants left after 11:30 p.m. Thursday, Baltimore Ravens defensive back Domonique Foxworth noted that even after the framework for an agreement is established, "there's really no deal until our players approve it."

The NFL locked out players in March, after negotiations broke down and the old collective bargaining agreement expired, and now the preseason is fast approaching. The need to arrive at a deal becomes greater with each passing day.

The Hall of Fame game that opens the exhibition season is scheduled for Aug. 7 between the St. Louis Rams and Chicago Bears, who hope to be able to start training camp at the end of next week. Yet camps will not open without a new CBA in place.

Talks gained steam in May, overseen by a court-appointed mediator, U.S. Magistrate Judge Arthur Boylan, who is on vacation this week. Boylan ordered both sides to meet with him in Minneapolis early next week, and the owners have a special meeting set for next Thursday in Atlanta, where they potentially could ratify a new deal—if one is reached by then.

Any agreement also must be voted on by groups of players, including the named plaintiffs in a class-action antitrust lawsuit pending in federal court and the NFLPA's 32 team representatives.

On rookie salaries, four people familiar with the talks said Thursday that first-round draft picks will sign four-year contracts with a club option for a fifth year. That represents a compromise; owners were hoping for five-year contracts, while players wanted highly drafted rookies to be under a team's control for only four years.

NFL owners have long sought to restrict the huge bonuses and salaries paid to unproven rookies, particularly those selected at the top of the draft. Quarterback Sam Bradford, taken No. 1 overall in 2010 by the St. Louis Rams, signed a six-year, $78 million contract that included a record $50 million in guaranteed money.

Under the system discussed Thursday, people told the AP, clubs will have an option for a fifth year on a rookie's contract for a predetermined amount based on the player's performance during the previous years of the deal.

Even once an agreement in principle on the core economic issues is drawn up, there will be more work to be done. That's because there are certain issues that won't be addressed in full until after the NFLPA re-establishes itself as a union—a process that might take a couple of days—and can then serve once again as a collective bargaining unit for the players.

Items that could fall under that umbrella include the league's drug-testing program, health insurance, retired players' pensions and other benefits, none of which is likely to be resolved completely while the union is still dissolved.

There's also a chance the players could pursue a lockout injunction for rookies and free agents after an appeals court ruled last week that the work stoppage could continue.

Disruptions to the planned preseason schedule would decrease the overall revenue pie—by tens or hundreds of millions of dollars, depending on how many games are canceled. The parameters for how to divide the more than $9 billion in annual league revenues have been sketched out, but remaining hurdles include the owners' desire to have more right-of-first-refusal tags for unrestricted free agents.

The players want to get back to free agency rules similar to 2009, when a four-year veteran whose contract expired was unrestricted. That minimum shifted to six years in 2010, when there was no salary cap because owners already had declared they were opting out of the old CBA.

This week's talks in New York began Monday with two days of meetings involving primarily lawyers. Wednesday's face-to-face session that was attended by Goodell, Smith, owners and players went nearly 11 hours.

Amateur Lewis shoots record 65, ties for lead

SANDWICH, England (AP)—Thomas Bjorn and Tom Lewis have nothing in common except for the unlikely position they shared Thursday atop the leaderboard at the British Open.

It's not just that one is twice as old.

Or that Bjorn is a 40-year-old pro who wonders how much longer he can compete at the highest level, while Lewis is an amateur making his major championship debut, his best golf still to come.

The biggest difference are their memories of Royal St. George's.

Bjorn took a small step toward atonement with a birdie on the par-3 16th—the hole that cost him the claret jug in 2003 when he took three shots to escape a pot bunker—on his way to a 5-under 65 in the toughest conditions of the opening round.

He made a birdie on Thursday, and couldn't help but smile when he saw it bounce away from trouble and toward the flag.

"When I hit the shot, I thought, 'This is going to struggle.' So when it just made it over that bunker, that was just a smile of knowing that things were going my way today," Bjorn said.

Lewis ran off four straight birdies late in his round, an amazing stretch that began on the par-5 14th. That's the hole where Lewis wrapped up the British Boys Amateur Championship two years ago, the highlight of a sterling amateur record. A par on the final hole gave him a 65, the lowest ever by an amateur in the British Open, making him the first amateur to lead this championship in 43 years.

"It was a special moment for me, winning here, and to come back to where you've won is extra special," Lewis said. "I was just thrilled to be here, but to shoot 65 the first round was something I wouldn't have thought. I was just happy to get the drive off the tee at the first, and that was all that mattered."

Adding to the nerves was playing alongside Tom Watson, such a popular figure in the Lewis household that they named their oldest son after the five-time Open champion. And to think the kid only wanted to make sure he didn't embarrass himself in front of Watson.

"He could be my grandson," Watson said. "I just had to smile inside to watch him play. I didn't play particularly well myself, but I certainly was impressed by the way he played."

Equally impressive to Watson was to overhear Lewis' caddie tell him there were still 54 holes left.

But what a start.

Bjorn wasn't even in the tournament until Vijay Singh withdrew on Monday, giving the Dane another shot at Royal St. George's. When someone suggested if he would be better off not playing to avoid memories of his meltdown, Bjorn cut him off.

"A couple of people asked me that question, 'Would you not just want to go home?'" Bjorn said. "This is The Open Championship. Where else do you want to be?"

Miguel Angel Jimenez also played in the windy morning conditions and had a bogey-free 66. He was joined later in the round by former U.S. Open champion Lucas Glover and Webb Simpson.

A dozen players were at 68, a group that two major champions from last year—PGA winner Martin Kaymer and U.S. Open champion Graeme McDowell, who was 3 over through five holes until a ferocious rally.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	55	35	.611	1 1/2
New York	53	36	.596	1 1/2
Tampa Bay	49	41	.544	6
Toronto	46	47	.495	10 1/2
Baltimore	36	53	.404	18 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	48	32	.534	_
Detroit	49	43	.533	_
Chicago	42	48	.478	5
Minnesota	42	48	.467	6
Kansas City	37	55	.402	12

West Division

Texas	52	41	.559	_
Los Angeles	50	42	.543	1 1/2
Seattle	43	49	.467	8 1/2
Oakland	39	53	.424	12 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Philadelphia	57	34	.626	_
Atlanta	54	38	.587	3 1/2
New York	46	45	.505	11
Washington	46	46	.500	11 1/2
Florida	44	48	.478	13 1/2

Central Division

St. Louis	49	43	.533	_
Milwaukee	49	44	.527	1/2
Pittsburgh	47	43	.522	1
Cincinnati	45	47	.489	4
Chicago	37	56	.398	12 1/2
Houston	30	62	.326	19

West Division

San Francisco	53	40	.570	_
Arizona	49	43	.533	3 1/2
Colorado	44	48	.478	8 1/2
Los Angeles	41	51	.446	11 1/2
San Diego	40	53	.430	13

Yesterday's Games

Toronto 16, New York 7
Texas 6, Seattle 0
Cleveland 8, Baltimore 4
Minnesota 8, Kansas City 4
Chicago 6, Florida 3
Colorado 12, Milwaukee 3
San Francisco 6, San Diego 2

BRITISH OPEN SCORES

SANDWICH, England (AP) — Scores Thursday in the British Open on 7,211-yard, par-70 (35-35) Royal St. George's Golf Club:
(a-amateur)

FIRST ROUND

Thomas Bjorn	33-32	–65
a-Tom Lewis	32-33	–65
Miguel Angel Jimenez	33-33	–66
Lucas Glover	35-31	–66
Webb Simpson	35-31	–66
Simon Dyson	34-34	–68
Kyle Stanley	35-33	–68
Pablo Larrazabal	35-33	–68
Darren Clarke	35-33	–68
Graeme McDowell	37-31	–68
Martin Kaymer	35-33	–68
Fredrik Andersson Hed	32-36	–68
Ricky Barnes	33-35	–68
Kurt Barnes	35-33	–68
Jeff Overton	35-33	–68
Ryan Palmer	34-34	–68
Jung-Gon Hwang	34-34	–68
Danny Wilett	35-34	–69
Mark Calcavecchia	33-36	–69
Ryan Moore	34-35	–69
Yuta Ikeda	35-34	–69
Ian Poulter	35-34	–69
Alexander Noren	37-32	–69
Anders Hansen	36-33	–69
Seung-Yul Noh	36-33	–69
Richard McEvoy	36-33	–69
Chad Campbell	34-35	–69
Edoardo Molinari	35-34	–69
Adam Scott	33-36	–69
Bubba Watson	34-35	–69
Steve Stricker	36-33	–69
Robert Allenby	36-33	–69
J.B. Holmes	34-35	–69
Robert Rock	35-34	–69
George Coetzee	35-34	–69
Graeme Storm	35-35	–70
Fredrik Jacobson	35-35	–70
Stephen Gallacher	38-32	–70
Stewart Cink	34-36	–70
Dustin Johnson	37-33	–70
Rickie Fowler	33-37	–70
Sergio Garcia	35-35	–70
Peter Whiteford	34-36	–70
Richard Green	35-35	–70
Trevor Immelman	38-32	–70
Tadahiro Takayama	36-34	–70
Phil Mickelson	35-35	–70
Davis Love III	36-34	–70
Justin Leonard	33-37	–70
Floris De Vries	36-34	–70
Simon Khan	35-36	–71
K.J. Choi	35-36	–71
a-Peter Uihlein	38-33	–71
Rory McIlroy	36-35	–71
Luke Donald	34-37	–71
Camilo Villegas	37-34	–71
Ross Fisher	36-35	–71
Matthew Millar	36-35	–71
Kenneth Ferrie	37-34	–71
Rory Sabbatini	37-34	–71
Charles Howell III	36-35	–71
Y.E. Yang	37-34	–71
a-Bryden Macpherson	35-36	–71
Jason Day	37-34	–71
Lee Westwood	38-33	–71
Charl Schwartzel	36-35	–71
Ben Crane	36-35	–71
Tom Lehman	38-33	–71
Adam Wootton	34-37	–71
Gary Boyd	35-36	–71
Gregory Havret	36-36	–72
Charley Hoffman	36-36	–72
Martin Laird	35-37	–72
Bill Haas	38-34	–72
Angel Cabrera	37-35	–72
Ernie Els	38-34	–72
John Daly	35-37	–72
Spencer Levin	37-35	–72
Prom Meesawat	38-34	–72
Harrison Frazar	37-35	–72
Anthony Kim	36-36	–72
Robert Karlsson	36-36	–72
Zach Johnson	39-33	–72
Justin Rose	35-37	–72
Jim Furyk	38-34	–72
Louis Oosthuizen	38-34	–72
Henrik Stenson	36-36	–72
Tom Watson	35-37	–72
S.M. Bae	38-34	–72
Lee Corfield	37-35	–72
Bo Van Pelt	37-36	–73
Francesco Molinari	36-37	–73
Matteo Manassero	35-38	–73
Peter Hanson	36-37	–73
Gregory Bourdy	36-37	–73
Paul Lawrie	36-37	–73
Sean O'Hair	37-36	–73
Thorbjorn Olesen	37-36	–73
Mark Laskey	37-36	–73
Neil Schietekat	39-34	–73
Martin Maritz	37-36	–73
Sandy Lyle	36-37	–73
Joost Luiten	38-35	–73
a-Lucas Bjerregaard	39-34	–73
Padraig Harrington	37-36	–73
Alejandro Canizares	35-38	–73
Jason Duffner	40-34	–74
Jerry Kelly	40-34	–74
Nathan Green	38-36	–74
Geoff Ogilvy	37-37	–74
Nick Watney	39-35	–74
Paul Casey	38-36	–74
Ryo Ishikawa	41-33	–74
Brian Davis	39-35	–74
Kevin Na	37-37	–74
Bob Estes	40-34	–74
Thomas Shadbolt	38-36	–74
Rick Kulacz	37-37	–74
Simon Lilly	39-35	–74
Thomas Aiken	38-36	–74
Steve Marino	35-39	–74
Raphael Jacquelin	37-37	–74
Mark Wilson	40-34	–74
Matt Kuchar	39-35	–74
Robert Garrigus	37-37	–74
Andrew Johnston	34-40	–74
Thongchai Jaidee	38-37	–75
Rhys Davies	37-38	–75
Gary Woodland	40-35	–75
K.T. Kim	37-38	–75
Alvaro Quiros	35-40	–75
Hiroyuki Fujita	35-40	–75
Tetsuji Hiratsuka	39-36	–75
Hunter Mahan	40-35	–75
Scott Jamieson	36-39	–75
Brandt Snedeker	39-36	–75
Jonathan Byrd	38-37	–75
Hiroo Kawai	38-37	–75
Bernhard Langer	40-35	–75
Jason Knutzon	38-37	–75
Prayad Marksaeng	40-36	–76
Mark O'Meara	38-38	–76
Retief Goosen	37-39	–76
Kevin Streelman	41-35	–76
Chih-Bing Lam	37-39	–76
Markus Brier	36-41	–77
Todd Hamilton	39-38	–77
Ben Curtis	39-38	–77
Aaron Baddeley	37-40	–77
Francis McGuirk	40-37	–77
Chris Tidland	39-38	–77
Brad Kennedy	37-40	–77
David Duval	40-38	–78
Andy Smith	40-41	–81
a-Craig Hinton	43-39	–82
Simon Edwards	44-38	–82

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gomez prevails in 9-ball tournament

Erwin Gomez barged into the win column of the VFW Post 3457 9-Ball Tournament after topping the July 9 qualifier.

Gomez, who had a runner-finish last month, and dropped to the loser's bracket in the first tournament in July, finally won after beating Jerry Soriano in the finals.

A first-round win over Mike Pangelinan gave Gomez a quarterfinals slot. Gomez was then pitted against Soriano in the next round and prevailed anew to make it to the semifinals. In the semis, Gomez extended his winning run to three when he downed Taylor Watanabe for the first finals berth.

Both Watanabe and Soriano fell to the losers' bracket of the double-elimination tournament. Soriano had to beat Simon Kapileo to keep his hopes alive for the second and last finals seat. Watanabe also remained in contention when he topped Leonard Sablan in the playoffs.

Soriano and Watanabe went on to face off for the right to challenge Gomez in the finals. Soriano won to arrange a rematch against Gomez, but the latter had the former's numbers again in the finals to claim the $40 top purse. Soriano settled for $30, while Watanabe and Sablan received $20 and $10, respectively.

Gomez's win foiled Soriano's bid for a third win in the last four tournaments. Soriano ruled the June 18 and 25 tournaments before Jimmy Wang ended his streak on July 2. Wang competed in last Saturday's event, but lost to Watanabe in the second round and was booted out of the tournament after bowing to Sablan in the loser's bracket.

Other players who joined last week's tournament were Eugene Borja, Nizer Masayos, and Bryan Neves.

The VFW Post 3457 hosts the 9-ball competition every Saturday with the weekly winners eventually participating in the Battle of the Champions. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

ASPAC

From Page 28

pitcher Ahn Jun off the mound, and broke the ice with an RBI walk gifted by reliever Jun Spark Sun.

Then Tszeng Citzen Tso drew a one out walk and teammates Weng Chi Cheng and Yang Chin Hao followed with base hits.

Ko Chia Hao bagged an RBI walk and next batter Hso Chi Ling drove in Cheng with a single, while Chin Hao snuck around to the plate off an error at second base.

Korea's Sun settled down after the shaky start and escaped the frame with the bases loaded.

Korea answered with a run in the top half of the fourth, as Jung Jae-Min led off with a hit and came home off a triple by Shin Min-Hyeok.

Chinese-Taipei came up empty in the bottom frame and both teams went three up and three down in the fifth inning. Chinese-Taipei then held strong in the final stand.

Winning pitcher Yang Chin Hao went all six and gave up one earned run off four hits and a walk with seven strikeouts. He struck out the side in the second inning.

Korea competed very well and only allowed three hits to Chinese-Taipei all in the third frame. However the runner-up also issued three of its five walks in the very same inning.

Chinese-Taipei was presented with the championship banner in front of the crowd after shaking hands with its opponents. Later last night, all teams attended the closing ceremony dinner banquet held at the Outrigger Guam Resort.

Meanwhile, host Guam thanked all the teams and tournament sponsors for their support in the weeklong competition.

"The wet conditions were disappointing, but we would like to thank the volunteers for all their hard work this week. We also want to thank all the teams for their patience and hope everyone enjoyed the experience," Guam Little League public information officer Gerry Cruz said.

Cruz also thanked Pacific Islands Club Guam, Hawaiian Rock Products Guam, IT&E, Gatorade, Pepsi, Coast 360 Federal Credit Union, Calvo's Insurance, 76 Canoco Phillips, Circle K Stores, Outrigger Guam Resort, Bank of Guam, and ASC Trust Corporation for their support.

CNMI

From Page 28

tournament. The list includes Jordan Butcher, Enrico del Rosario, Ethan Dickinson, Kenneth Domingo, Gregzon Fontanilla, Joel and Mason Fruit, Dakota Hall, William Hinson II, Kennedy Izuka, Hunter Jewell, Andrew Johnson, Angelo Jones, Jehn Joyner, Jake Lee, Sean Perez, John Taisacan, and Jirech Yobech.

Before leaving this morning, the team had training sessions for three days. Players had their morning and afternoon practice last Monday and Tuesday and then they played against visiting players from Faith Baptist Bible College of Idaho and a couple of CNMI National Men's Team members last Wednesday.

The Commonwealth youth strikers won the scrimmage, 3-2, with Joyner scoring two goals and Lee chipping in one. After the victory, the team failed to practice last Thursday and yesterday due to ran.

"It was good win, as it sort of gave them momentum, going to Taipei. Overall, our players are in good condition. Come game time, we expect them to play 100 percent from the opening buzzer to the last. In Taipei, they are expected to do the things we practiced in our training sessions," Angeles said.

He added that CNMI U15 strikers underwent a two-week goalie clinic conducted by Japan Football Association's Akira Yamanaka and this will help them face tough foes in Taipei.

The EAFF tournament will be played at the Taipei Municipal Stadium and besides the host, the CNMI will also face Hong Kong (July 21), defending champion Korea (July 22), Guam (July 23), and Macau (July 24).

FAVORABLE

From Page 28

The report was distributed to the 22 Pacific Games Associations (PGAs) on July 4 and during the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association monthly meeting last Thursday, NMASA president Michael White told local sports officials that the report came out favorably to the CNMI.

White said Council president Vidhya Lakhan and executive director Andrew Minogue were impressed with the CNMI facilities. The two Council officials visited Saipan late last month and stayed here for four days to tour the various facilities the CNMI proposed for the 2017 Mini Games and meet with sports and government officials.

Saipan was Lakhan and Andrew Minogue's last stop before making the evaluation report. They went to Nauru first in May and then proceeded to Vanuatu in the same month.

Other details of the evaluation report were not discussed and it was only made available for the PGAs. However, White said the biggest challenge for the CNMI's two competitors will be the building of new facilities.

Nauru has no stadium, that can accommodate the opening and closing ceremonies and the athletics competition and is proposing to build one and complete it by January 2016, according to its bid documents.

Vanuatu has the old Korman Stadium, which was build more than 20 years ago and hosted the 1993 Mini Games but will need a major facelift.

The CNMI has the IAAF and OAA-certified Oleai Sports Complex track and field facility, which is the proposed venue for football and the opening and closing ceremonies. Inside the complex are two baseball fields and the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, which is now undergoing renovation.

The Commonwealth has other facilities which will only require minor repairs and most of these were used in the 2006 Micronesian Games and other regional tournaments the CNMI hosted in the past 10 years.

Both Nauru and Vanuatu are aiming to build several other venues, however, according to White these nations will rely on the generosity of foreign governments to construct the proposed facilities.

The winning bid will be announced on Sept. 4 during the PGAs general assembly in Noumea, New Caledonia. Twelve votes from the 22 PGAs is needed to win the hosting rights for the 2017 Mini Games. If no nation has the majority, a second round of voting will take place between the Top 2 vote getters in the first round.

The evaluation report will help PGAs decide which country is ready to host the Mini Games six years from now. The three nations can submit supplementary documents or reports for their respective bids between now and until the selection day. Then on Sept. 4, the CNMI, Nauru, and Vanuatu will be given 30 minutes each to present their respective bids.

PACQUIAO

From Page 28

has won it on three occasions, the last time being 2009 when he bested Sugar Shane Mosley among others.

This time, fans around the world demonstrated their overwhelming support for Pacquiao as the best fighter in both boxing and mixed martial arts.

In his last two fights Pacquiao demolished Antonio Margarito and Mosley, respectively. Eight titles in eight weight divisions, Pacquiao was named the "Fighter of the Decade" by the BWAA.

His trophies include the 2006, 2008 and 2009 Ring Magazine "Fighter of the Year" awards, 2006, 2008 and 2009 BWAA "Fighter of the Year," 2008 and 2009 ESPN Star

Sports "Champion of Champions " and the 2008 Yahoo Sports "Fighter of the Year."

In addition, the Filipino southpaw, who was elected congressman of Saragani province in the May 2010 elections, was also named by Time Magazine as one of the most influential people in the world in 2009. ***(PDI)***

Courage, fortitude key Japan at Women's World Cup

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Judge declares mistrial in Clemens case

Page 25

Chinese-Taipei clinches third ASPAC title

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

GUAM— Chinese-Taipei won its third straight title after defeating Korea in the finals of the 2011 Asia-Pacific Little League Regional Championship, 3-1, yesterday at the muddy Northern Region Sports Complex in Dededo.

A three-run bottom of the third inning was all Chinese-Taipei needed to end the rain-delayed championship match and advance to the World Series, which takes place next month in Williamsport, Virginia.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Members and supporters of Chinese-Taipei pose with their championship banner after beating Korea, 3-1, in the finals of the 2011 Asia-Pacific Major Division Regional Championship yesterday at the Northern Region Sports Complex in Dededo, Guam.

Before the finals, a semis match between Korea and Thailand continued in the third inning with Korea having a 5-0 advantage. The game was suspended due to rain on Thursday. Upon resumption, Korea took that game an inning later via mercy rule, 10-0.

Then the final duel was originally set for 11am, but was pushed back to 1:30pm because of heavy rainfall. Tournament organizers scrambled to prepare the field because suspension of the match was off the table as both teams are scheduled to depart this morning.

At the start of the championship game, both teams stranded a runner and Korea went 1-2-3 to start the second, but kept a lid on the defending champion in the bottom half of that inning.

Chinese-Taipei stuffed Korea again in the top of the third and then the former came alive in the bottom frame.

Chinese-Taipei took a 3-0 lead off three hits, three walks, and an error. It loaded the bases right away, knocking starting

See ASPAC on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Members of the CNMI U15 Team run at the pitch during a morning training session at the Oleai Sports Complex.

CNMI U15 strikers all set for EAFF tourney

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI U15 Team will leave Saipan this morning for a mini camp in Japan over the weekend before heading to Taiwan for the 2011 East Asian Football Federation U15 Youth Tournament.

"They are very excited to meet Japanese teams and compete in Taiwan. All the players are looking forward to the mini camp and the EAFF competition where they are hoping to put on a better showing this time," coach Jersh Angeles said in a telephone interview with *Saipan Tribune*.

In Japan, the Commonwealth youth strikers will first play Yokohama FC U15 squad and then in Chiba City, the visitors will challenge the Jef United Chiba. Angeles' wards will also duel players from the Tamadai-Meguro Junior High School in Meguro, Tokyo and then watch two J-League professional soccer matches.

The visitors will leave Japan for Taipei, Taiwan on Monday afternoon, as they are scheduled to play the host in their opening game on Wednesday.

The CNMI U15 Team has an 18-player roster for the EAFF

See CNMI on Page 27

Favorable review for Mini Games venues

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI received a positive review from the Pacific Games Council's evaluation report on the proposed venues for the 2017 Mini Games.

See FAVORABLE on Page 27

NMASA president Michael White, center, and BANMI president Tony Rogolifoi, right, join Pacific Games Council president Vidhya Lakhan in a site inspection at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field facility last month.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Pacquiao named ESPN Fighter of the Year

AP

The Philippines' Manny Pacquiao, left, seen here hitting England's Ricky Hatton during their bout in 2009, was named the ESPN ESPY "Fighter of the Year" at the Nokia Theater in Los Angeles.

MANILA— Pound-for-pound king Manny Pacquiao has added another award to his trophy room by being named the ESPN ESPY "Fighter of the Year" at the Nokia Theater in Los Angeles.

Pacquiao bested the ageless Bernard Hopkins, 2010 Boxing Writers Association of America "Fighter of the Year" Sergio Martinez and UFC welterweight champion Georges Saint Pierre.

Pacquiao has been nominated for the award four times and

See PACQUIAO on Page 27